The Chrysalis of Romance

INEZ G. HOWARD

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The CHRYSALIS OF ROMANCE

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By

INEZ G. HOWARD

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TO

OSCAR ROBERT HOWARD

FOREWORD

THIS little book, that is trying to discover America to the Americans, has been some time in the making. It was started as a result of a few graphic words from a lecturer on the birth of the letter A. That was its beginning.

An impelling force has carried it on. I have been greatly helped by the beautiful encouragement of my mother, who thought the book was needed. Even now, though she has joined the Great Majority, she has not forgotten the little book, which is still writing itself. Her gentle influence still guides me. Her thought that there was a demand for the book has sustained me.

—The Author.

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INTRODUCTION

THIS uniquely American book will speak for itself. It will appeal to the old and the new American alike. The research work, covering a period of many years, holds unusual interest for the litterateur, and will prove a guide through book-land for the uninformed.

The book has a twofold value: It will answer the questions of the eagerly inquiring mind and will stimulate the incurious to look below the surface of things.

At this moment when the world is in a transition state there is a definite need for the book. Its wholesomeness will stimulate idealism, and besides being a valuable addition to the sum of human knowledge, its sincerity and simplicity should be contagious.

The book is the outcome of that scientific seeking, which Herbert Spencer calls the highest type of mind; the mind which searches for the causation of things and asks of every custom and commodity: "How did you become so?"

There is no truer Americanization work than that of discovering America to Americans. That is what this little book will do.

John Steven McGroarty

THE CHRYSALIS OF ROMANCE

CHAPTER I

A Baedeker of Romance

WE THINK of periods of the past as being rich in beauty and culture in proportion to the romance and mystery which clustered about them. It was the days of the Troubadours that gave us the "Romaunt of the Rose"; except for the Knight and his romantic setting we would have no "Canterbury Tales," no Arthurian legend.

Along with old Egypt's magic and mystery, there existed the greatest culture of the ancient world. We are wont to speak of our own time as crude, unromantic, ultra commercial, and to disparage all modern customs as though they were made of the "sounding brass" of meaningless materialism.

The truth is, there is romance in the woof and warp of every commonplace act and article, in our so-called commonplace, everyday life. Back of every custom,

commodity and habit, there is a story, a legend, a symbol or a superstition. Back of every symbol a law. Back of that law—God.

There is a wealth of legendary lore connected with everything we do, everything we see, or touch. Playing cards, the barber's pole, weddings, and even our Almighty Dollar—what do we know about the origin of these? What lies back of their modern form and usage? How did we get them?

As from a cornucopia Romance is showered upon us!

Romance Everywhere

Come then for a little walk down the village street of any town in America and let us see what traces we can find of the foot and finger-prints of that elusive and illusive figure—Romance! Come with seeing eyes and an open mind! And, like the anthropologist who reconstructs a figure from fossils of the past, we shall find enough remnants of fairy tale, myth and symbol to recreate Romance and make of it a palpable entity.

We would never think of starting out without some jingling coins in our pockets! For are we not called "money-mad Americans"? But even so, the word has something God-like in it! It is no wonder that we worship it! The first Roman coins were minted in the temple of Jupiter Moneta, and money took its name from its birthplace.

Our own Almighty Dollar has an interesting history. In old Germany they used to dig bits of silver from a valley called Joachim's Thal (valley in German being thal), and these bits of silver were called thalers, which grew into our word "dollar."

The origin of the dollar mark is still a matter of much controversy. One theory insists that it is U and S written hurriedly—one over the other; but the more widely accepted theory, and by far the more romantic, is that it is derived from the figure 8. A dollar contains eight reals—Spanish coins—known in Captain Kidd's time as the "pieces of eight" of piracy. Our "eight bits" and "six bits" of slang terminology are derived from this coin.

Putting the Might in the "Almighty Dollar"

The figures on our dollar, the eagle, stars, olive branch and arrows—how many Americans know specifically what they mean? The eagle has always been the symbol of authority and power from time immemorial. With the olive branch in one claw and the sheaf of arrows in the other, he symbolizes Congress invested with all the powers of peace and war. The thirteen stars, of course, stand for the first thirteen states.

Even the corrugations on the edges of our coins have romantic origin. They testify to our great love of precious metal. It is very easy to file bits of silver from smooth-edged coins and the amount thus collected in one day would be of considerable value. The slightest defacement of a corrugated coin, however, is noticeable, and this little fence built around each piece of money reminds us to be honest.

Having peeped at the family tree of the dollar, let us go further down the village street. If we can find so much of interest in prosaic money, surely Romance will have left finger-prints on many other common things.

The Doctor Says a Prayer!

Let us stop, for a moment, at the office of that most scientific of our citizens—the physician. Can it be that there is anything legendary about a doctor? Does he know himself that he uses, seriously, a dozen times a day, a hieroglyphic from an ancient religion? That old sign ℞ at the top of every prescription is an appeal to a pagan god. It says, "Help me, O Jupiter!" and was the cry of the ancient Roman physician, for Jupiter ruled the blood, the ancients thought, and his help was deemed necessary in the recovery of a patient.

This is a relic of the day when medicine was a sacred and religious rite, when priest and physician were one. As late, even, as the days of the Christian apostles, it was believed that he who had the "charisma," or "chrism," could heal disease through prayer and anointing the head of the sick; there seems to be a return to this belief in the faith-healing and laying on of hands of today.

A tendency toward a more spiritual conception of healing in modern times is shown in the many mental healing and autosuggestive cults; in the Coué ritual repeated so faithfully by thousands, day by day, and in the recognition of the psyche by the materia medica.

Have we any places of pilgrimage in America? At Lourdes, in France, we saw last summer, hundreds of suffering mortals who had made pilgrimage to this shrine. Judging from the number of crutches hanging

near the sacred spot where the vision appeared to Bernadette—their faith has made them whole.

Far be it from us to connect the physician with that ancient symbol, the skull and cross-bones, but it is a survival of picture writing that we see every day, and should receive honorable mention. It tells with a sign, much better than words could, the exact nature of the contents of a dangerous phial.

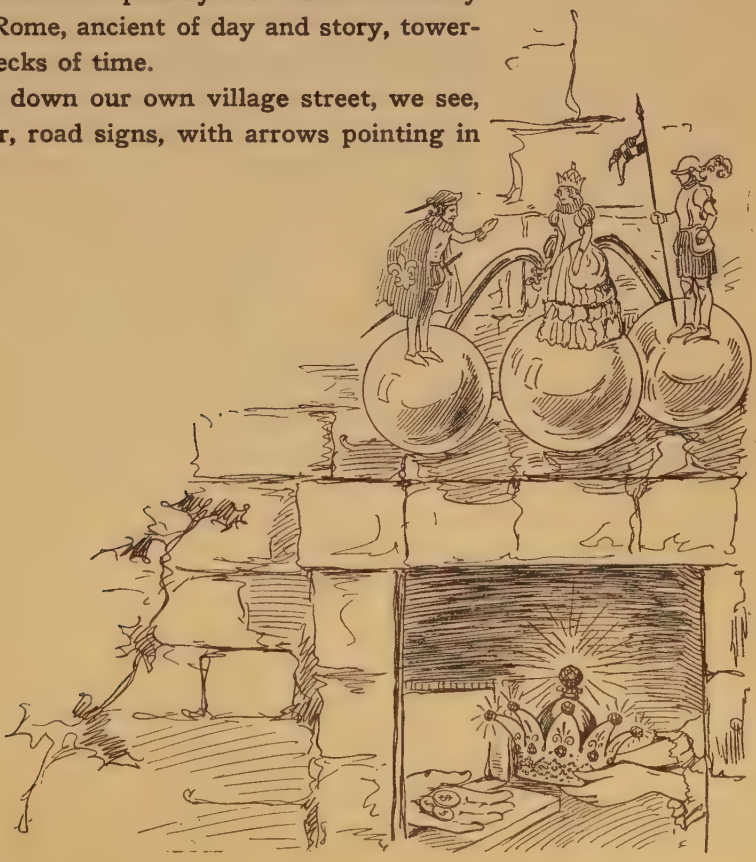
While in the doctor's office, let us inquire for the Elixir of Youth. What are our modern theories about the youth-renewing properties of goat glands but an evidence of our faith in this fabulous draught? The discoveries of the importance of the thyroid gland in the human body may be the real finding of the fabled Fountain of Youth, and old Ponce de Leon's idea that there was such a fountain may not have been so far wrong, after all!

What Every Village Knows

Perhaps across from the physician's office we see a barber's pole. Do you know where it got its gently whirling red and white stripes? In those delightfully simple times, the Middle Ages, the barber and the physician were one. The stripes were the bandages of the blood-letter, and it is one of the jokes of Old Father Time that this symbol has been retained by the barber side of the family.

Look across the street again. Is that a pawnbroker's sign? Travesty of time and wealth, this symbol has indeed fallen to a low estate! It used to be incorporated in the coat of arms of the Medici family, that ancient, haughty house of Italy, and stood as a symbol of their vast wealth and dominions. The Villa de Medici now occupied by the French Academy still stands in Rome, ancient of day and story, towering o'er the wrecks of time.

Rambling on down our own village street, we see, on every corner, road signs, with arrows pointing in



different directions. Further out on the country highways these road signs may have curved lines, indicating dangerous curves ahead. These are modern survivals of picture writing and belong to the same family as the "blazed trail."

Have we passed the clubhouse yet? Here there will be an afternoon card party, perhaps, and chess, bowling, golf, tennis and mah jongg. Romance has left many finger-prints here, if we take out our microscope and examine carefully.

Playing cards have a remarkably colorful and interesting background. They are really in themselves the remnant of an old religion. The Tarot of the Bohemians, a degenerate form of which we see in "telling fortunes" by cards, was their religion, and the cards were their symbols of divination.

Calling cards are literally the descendants of playing cards. The first calling cards were written on the backs of playing cards, and there is in the British Museum today a card of this sort, bearing Sir Isaac Newton's name in his own handwriting. But imagine our own amazement, in this modern day, were we to receive from the butler the Ace of Spades, perhaps, with Mrs. John Henry Brown written on the back!

The game of chess used to be a royal pastime, as well as a serious study of strategy. Both the Hindus and the Chinese claim the invention of the game and it was used to instruct the Oriental princes in the art of war. The chess figures have changed somewhat in the passage of time, since we have records of the game

as far back as two thousand years before the Christian era, but the game itself has varied little.

We are indebted to Benjamin Franklin for the importation of the game of chess into the United States and our colonial ancestors played it with great skill, seriousness and dignity.

Poker, alias Post-an-pair! Is there a more American game than poker? Yet it originated in the west of England under the name of Post-an-pair. It was played exclusively by the aristocracy, and how it came to be the favorite game of our wild and woolly west is a matter of conjecture. But it is typical of our modern America. Its teaching is: Play up your opportunities, keep your own counsel, and make the most of what you have.

No village street is complete without its bowling alley. Ninepins and bowling had, certainly, an interesting origin. The first ninepins were miniature figures of the nine worthies of the ancient world, including Alexander the Great! Some of our modern figures are like ninepins, too—one knock, and they all go over.

How the Goat Got into Society

And just across the street from the bowling alley is the lodge room, a treasure house of romance. Although few of the modern order realize it, there is much in Masonry of the ancient mysteries of Greece, India and Egypt. Even the custom of "riding the goat" is a symbol. The goat stood for the sign of Capricorn in the Zodiac, which sign the sun passes through from the winter solstice—December 21st to January 20th. This so-called standing still of the sun before it began its journey northward was a time of initiation in ancient religions and the sun was therefore represented as riding the goat. The goat was the symbol of Pan, the god-of-everything. The sublime plays of Greece were called goat-songs—tragedy literally means goat-song—from the players dressing themselves to represent goats and partly because a goat was the prize paid for a good play. Does not our modern slang "He got my goat" still pay tribute to that old god-of-everything? For, classically translated, "getting your goat" means exhausting your entire mental resources!

Vulcan, the Mender of Old Tires

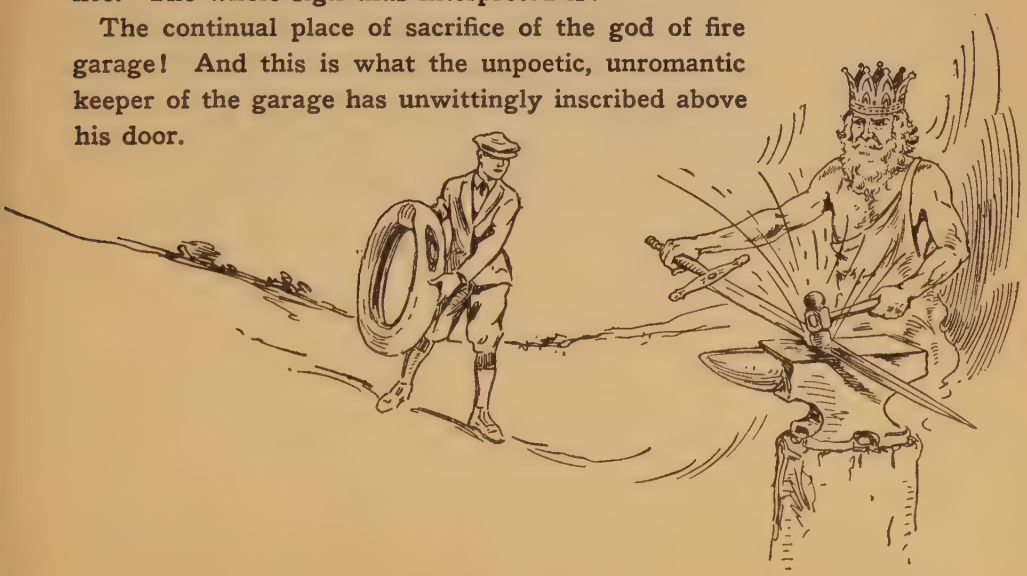
Even the garages and oil stations, with which the village street is liberally supplied nowadays, bear the marks of Romance. Many of them carry the sign "Vulcanizing Done Here." Vulcan, the blacksmith of the gods, the welder of swords for the immortals, is called upon to mend our punctured tires!

In some of our American possessions in the Pacific, the name of this same classic god still lives. Before a little garage in the village street of Hilo, Hawaii, there is a sign:

"Kilauea Vulcanizing Garage"

Analyzing this phrase, we find that the word Kilauea has three roots. "Ki" or "ti" is the name of a plant with large leaves in which fish are wrapped for cooking. The plant suggests the idea of cooking. "Lau" is leaf. "Ea" means continuing or living. Hence, "Kilauea" means the living leaf of the "ti" plant, or, figuratively interpreted, the continual place of sacrifice. The whole sign thus interpreted is:

The continual place of sacrifice of the god of fire garage! And this is what the unpoetic, unromantic keeper of the garage has unwittingly inscribed above his door.



How the Honeymoon Came Up

Coming back to the village we are exploring, we pass a church and find rice scattered down the steps and over the pavement. Anyone could tell that there had been a wedding, and, naturally, Romance is expected at a wedding. But why do they throw rice? Why do they tie a nuptial knot with the wedding ring, accompanied by a best man? And why do they have a honeymoon?

Rice-throwing is one of the most ancient and symbolic of all our modern customs. The Brahmins of India, back in early Aryan civilization, used the rice symbol in their marriage ceremony to typify fertility and fecundity. The Tartar races of eastern Asia threw rice at bridal couples to remind them of that first injunction of the Creator, "Increase and multiply!" Rice was considered by these two races as the most prolific of grains, but the Jews used wheat and the Russians oats or barley for the same purpose.

The word "wedding" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word, wed, a pledge. The best man is accounted for as a relic of the days when marriage by capture was the common custom. He was chosen by the bridegroom to protect the bride or to assist in her capture and sometimes to divert attention from the groom, so that the pursuers would take the wrong road.

Although the wedding ring has assumed many forms, has been worn on different fingers, and has a

variety of legends clinging to it, it is almost universally accepted as the emblem of eternity, as a typified link in a chain, and likewise, as a phallic symbol. It is therefore a remnant of picture writing and says to the married woman wearing it, "Forever and ever, you, as a wife, are bound to one lord and shall live in obedience and chastity," and she who would eliminate the word "obey" from the marriage service should also absolve her husband from the purchase of the platinum wedding ring!

The gimmal ring (from the Latin word gemmelus—joined) was composed of two separate bands which fitted into each other by means of nicked edges which dovetailed together. Each one of the contracting parties was given a half of this ring at the betrothal and at the wedding ceremony both circles were united on the bride's finger. The Egyptian, Assyrian and Jewish women wore bracelets, or anklets, as a symbol of subjugation to their lords, instead of the wedding ring. In the middle ages, when anatomy was but a young science, it was believed that a nerve ran straight from the third finger of the left hand to the heart, and that this nerve was so sensitive it could detect a poisonous substance by touch. It was therefore called "the medicated finger," and the placing of the ring upon it was thought a means of keeping a woman virtuous.

Honeymoons have existed for many centuries. With the ancient Greeks, the word melos, honey, had a mystic significance. It is the root from which we get our word melody.

In the old Teutonic days a bridal couple used to drink, for one month, a wine composed of honey, called mead—hence the name honey-moon. In France today the custom is almost the same.

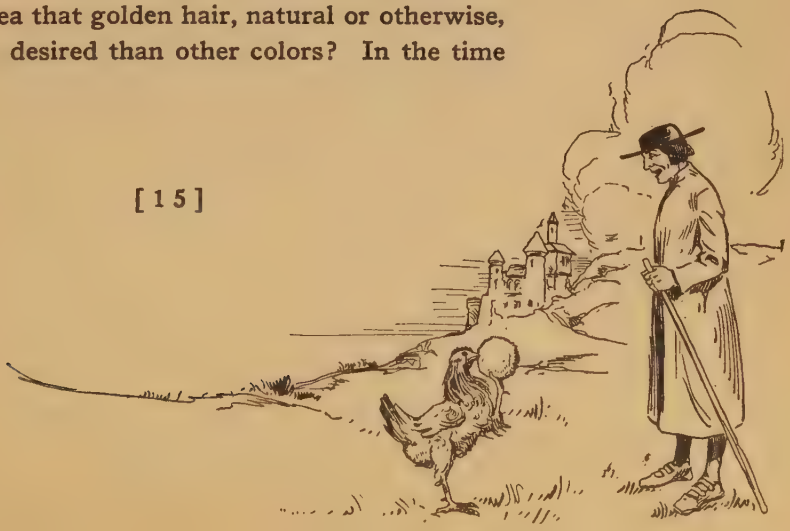
In modern Morocco today, the prospective mother-in-law takes a little jar of honey as a gift when she goes to pay her first call on her son's intended wife. The natives say that it is to "sweeten" the girl's disposition.

Romance Powders Its Nose!

Leaving the dear little church, we stroll down the street to the "Salon de Beauté." Rouge, henna, dyes and powder are as old as the eternal feminine. In ancient Oriental countries henna was used, not to change the color of the hair, but to stain the finger-tips and nails a rosy hue, a practice even now followed in many lands. Antimony, the ancestor of the eye-brow pencil, and rouge were used almost exclusively by priestesses, dedicated to Ishtar, Astarte, or Venus, different names for the same divinity. When these pagan religions degenerated, the priestesses became mere courtesans, and from this, probably, we receive our mid-Victorian idea of the disrepute of cosmetics.

The great modern user of cosmetics, however, is not a priestess, but what we call a "chicken"! If any American were asked if this is a typical American expression, he would certainly say "Yes!" But the truth of the matter is, the term originated with Jonathan Swift, yes, Jonathan Swift, himself! He said, "She's no chicken; she's on the wrong side of thirty, if she's a day." So we can not claim the "chicken" as a typical American product, after all.

One thinks of "chicken," beauty parlor and peroxide in the same mental breath, as it were. Where did we get our idea that golden hair, natural or otherwise, is more to be desired than other colors? In the time



of Nero amber was considered very precious and beautiful. Nero, whose tastes ran to poetry and art, described his wife's hair as amber-colored, and immediately the court ladies appeared with amber-hued tresses!

Over in our own Hawaii, the ancient idea of hairdressing was a short fringe across the forehead, turned up and held stiffly in place by a lime wash or one made of white clay. Was that the ancestor of our bandoline?

The "Mouche," or beauty spot, as we call it, literally means "fly," in French. Used now to heighten the beauty of skin by contrast, it was once an important political badge. The ladies of the Tory party used the "mouche" on one side of their faces, while the Whig ladies placed it on the other to proclaim their political standards. If modern party affiliations had to be so expressed, what a speckled tribe we would be!

Leaving the village beauty parlor we meet the village vampire, tripping coquettishly along. Little conception has she of her ancestral heritage—a creature half bat and half human, who sucked the blood of sleeping people. But though she has changed some in the course of evolution, have her victims altered an iota? Kipling said, "A Fool There Was," but need he have put it in the past tense?

The Kindergarten of Romance

We turn from the vampire to a window gaily decorated with bright objects which attract our attention —it is the toy shop. Puzzles, games and toys of all descriptions fill the window. Though not wholly abandoned to the realm of childhood, the cross-word puzzle, a descendant of the rebus, is a riddle, a game, an instructive toy, and a mental stimulant! The puzzle and rebus were once practical forms of writing. Closely allied with the puzzle is the riddle, and in ancient times riddles were of a serious character; they were frequently of mythological significance and could be answered only by learned persons. The life or death of the person questioned often depended on the manner in which he answered the riddle.

Of such a character was the riddle proposed by the Sphinx to Oedipus. Elements of mythology are constantly being carried into modern beliefs and investigated by modern science. One of the basic ideas of Freud's Psycho-analysis is founded on, and called after, this very tale of Oedipus, and is called the "Oedipus Complex."

At the end of the street, on the outskirts of the town, we see a circus tent. Who doesn't love a circus? Surely a circus is unalloyed Romance! The classic Roman circus was limited to contests between animals and later between men and animals, but we

have added many curious things from many lands. No circus now is complete without its tattooed man. That form of decoration was used in former times much as the branding of cattle is now, so that a master might reclaim his slave, or that soldiers could be identified and ransomed after being captured by the enemy during war. Tattooing is still used for the sake of ornamentation in the Hawaiian Islands. In ancient Hawaii it signified mourning for a chief or friend and many women were tattooed on the backs of their hands in the pattern of an openwork glove.

On the outskirts of the town, near the circus grounds, we will find the village blacksmith's shop, with a horseshoe nailed over the door. Did the blacksmith know, when he nailed that rusty shoe over his door, he was using a symbol of the most ancient religion in the world? The horseshoe is one of the survivals of "phallicism," the worship of the creative and generative principle in nature.

Then we come to the cemetery, the last place in the world we wish to go, to be sure, but we shall find many interesting symbols and legends here. However, not so far as we know has an American cemetery ever been used as a gala gathering place. Once upon a time in the long ago, Paris was vanquished by the English. They actually celebrated this victory by a wild orgy of dissipation and revels in the Cemetery of The Innocents!

The broken wheel, chiseled on the headstone, is a symbol of life cut off before maturity. In olden times the American Indian used to keep a record of his life by means of a wheel with sixty spokes, one spoke for each year. The events of the year were drawn in pictograph on the spoke. The broken column is another manner of expressing the idea of life cut short.

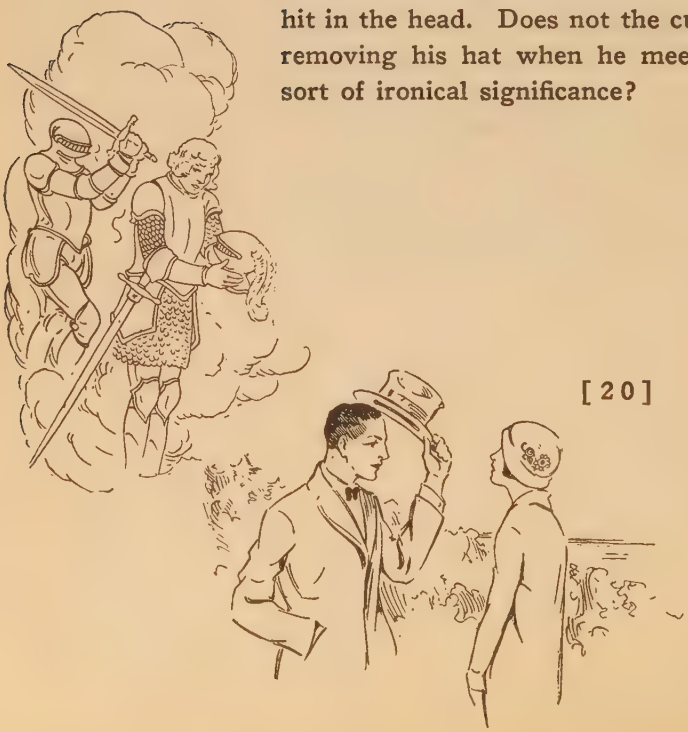
The dove, which has symbolized peace and rest since the days of Noah, carved on the marble monuments, suggests the gentleness of angels and the eternal peace of Heaven. The wings, which are frequently seen on headstones, symbolized omnipresence and immortality, both with the Egyptians and the Persians. With the Jews, wings were the emblem of security, rest and peace. All of these symbolic conceptions were embodied in the plumes used on hearses, and although we do not often see them now, feathers

of all kinds are prized by primitive peoples. In Hawaii, today, can be seen many relics which show the great esteem in which feathers are held.

Taxes, in Hawaii, used to be paid altogether in feathers, and they were used on royal standards and banners as the badge of the reigning sovereign. There are several marvelous feather cloaks to be seen in the museum there. They are composed of innumerable tiny, brilliantly colored feathers, and they belonged to the royal house.

Our American Indian's fondness for feathers is well known and the warrior always took the feathers of freshly killed eagles, believing that the spirit of this swift and warlike bird would hover around the head-dress and give the human warrior courage and great prowess.

Coming out of the cemetery we meet a man who lifts his hat to us. A mark of deference and an act of courtesy, we say. But such was not its original meaning. The knights removed their helmets to show they were among friends and were not afraid of being hit in the head. Does not the custom, then, of man's removing his hat when he meets a woman, have a sort of ironical significance?

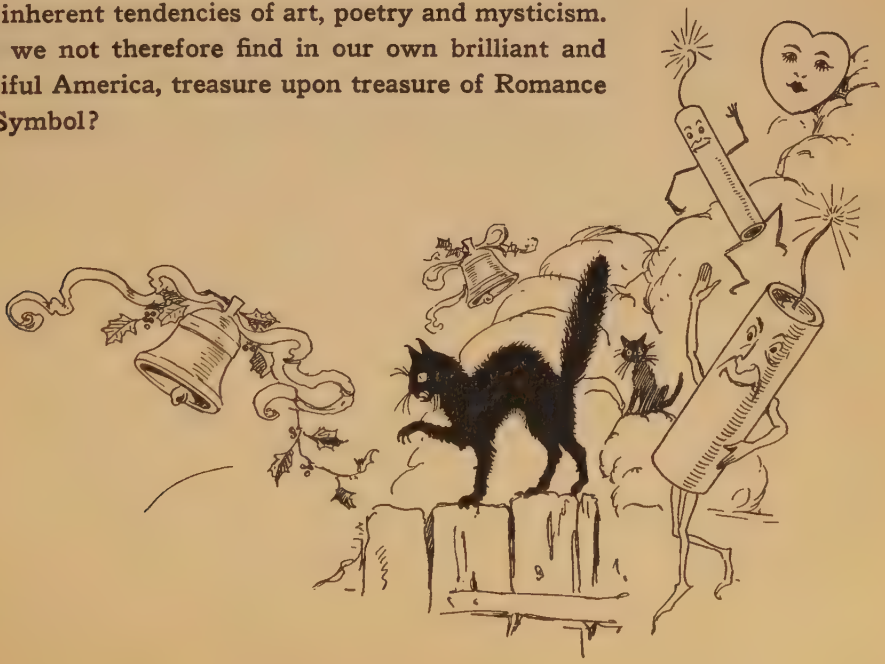


From the Chrysalis of Time

Thus it is from the most tragic to the most trivial of our customs, down to the infinitesimal details of our daily life, there is ever a going back to the past, so that in reality we never actually leave it. In our flimsy, fragile party favors, that flit like gay butterflies lighting on a holiday, the lace paper valentines, the black paper witches of Hallowe'en, the red Christmas bells—in all of these, we are paying romantic tribute to some ancient god or saint.

Our ordinary conversation is fraught with fragments of lore. For instance, the expression the "nick of time" refers to the nick-stick by which dairymen and bakers kept their accounts. The schoolgirls who tie a knot in their handkerchiefs as a means of remembering something, unwittingly borrow a very ancient custom used by the tribes of West Africa, as a means of calculating.

There is a wealth of legendary lore back of everything. America has gathered to her hospitable shores various peoples with their customs, their traditions, their inherent tendencies of art, poetry and mysticism. Shall we not therefore find in our own brilliant and beautiful America, treasure upon treasure of Romance and Symbol?



CHAPTER II

A B C

WHEN Jesus was a little boy, his mother, Mary, took Him by the hand and seated Him at the feet of the village schoolmaster among the other children of Nazareth. When His master looked upon Him he loved Him; he stroked His curly head and called Him a good boy. He then told Him that He should learn His A B C's. So he began to show Him Aleph, the first letter of the alphabet.

"But why is it called Aleph?" asked the boy.

"Ask me no vain questions," answered the master, "but proceed with the next letter, Beth."

"Not so," said Jesus, "I must comprehend the first, for God maketh nothing in vain." Then, taking all letters in their order, He expounded unto His master the significance of their form.

The theories of the alphabet are as the sands of the sea.

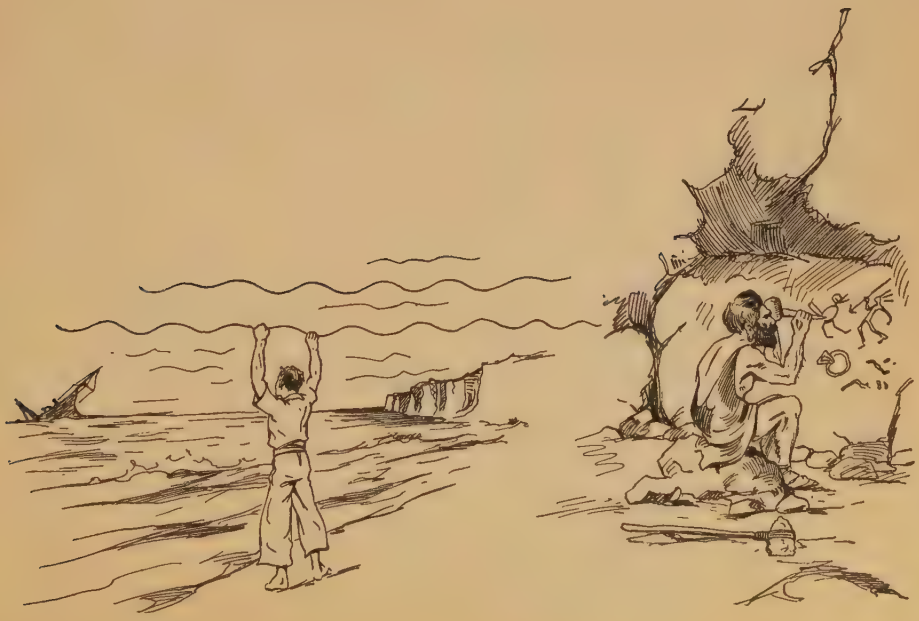
Volumes could be filled with the available data on the vast subject.

There is no mystery in the name Alphabet. The first two letters of the Greek alphabet, alpha and beta, combined, form the word alphabet.

Nowadays in such charming readable stories as "Ancient Man," in "How the Present Came Out of the Past," and "Little Number Stories of Long Ago," even a child of ten may catch a glimpse of the story of the Alphabet. But only one generation ago how different it was! The knowledge that was slowly and carefully gleaned from the odd and scattering books was almost as precious as in the days of "PRIMITIVE MAN" when knowledge was considered sacred and only priests dared to possess it.

The Cave Man's Study

In a grotto of stone or a hut built of leaves, the cave-man accomplished his literary efforts. He had no letters, so he made signs and pictures. How did he make them? Put yourself in his place, gentle reader. He had stone, flint, tusks of animals; no great supply of writing material. But when he felt that he must convey a message he invented a crude way of doing so. MODERN MAN washed ashore on Desert Island with nothing at all to work with, would scratch some words upon a rock or catch a wandering wave-length! But PRIMITIVE MAN had no words, no letters, no radio. It is a great study and a fascinating one to learn how from these rude pictures, we finally got the Egyptian hieroglyphics, then at last our good, trustworthy alphabet, and now we write, print, read, talk, sing, and we have typewriters, adding machines, graphophones, radios and telephotos, and next we shall have the vision radios.



Old Sol Rules the Scribe

If we carefully examine ancient alphabets, we find a very curious thing. The reason that we write from right to left is a geographical one! When the savage of the northern hemispheres looked at the Sun, it rose at his left and set at his right. The opposite was true of the native of the southern hemisphere.

We find that the alphabet originating south of the equator read from right to left and those originating north of the equator vice versa.

Although a ten-year-old child of today understands more about the evolution of the alphabet than did the sages of the ancient world, the savant of modern times can scarcely express a new state of feeling!

There is much curious symbolism connected with A, this first letter of the alphabet in all languages. We are all familiar with the saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." Everything in the universe is included between the first and last letters of the alphabet—it is a thing of mystery and romance.

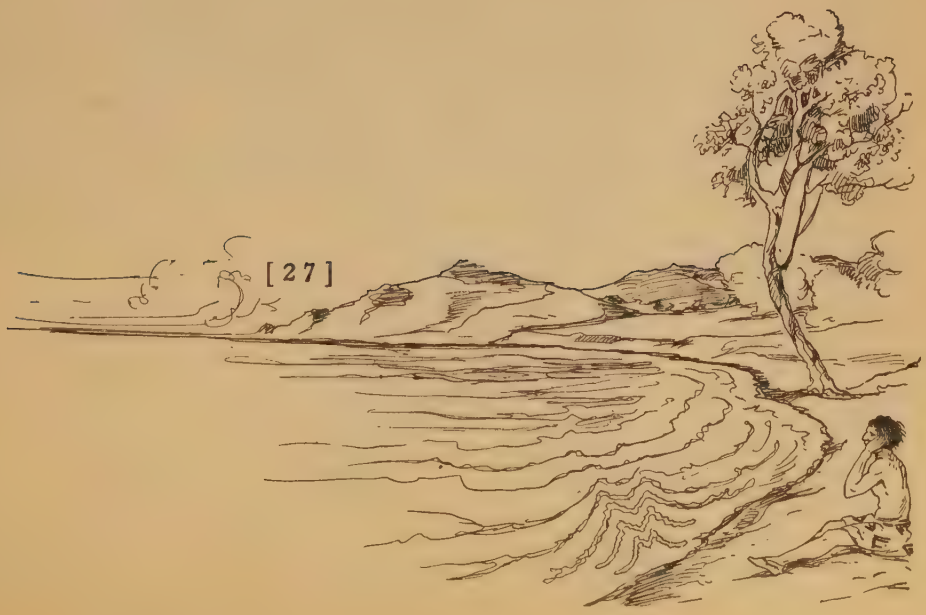
The Madonna of Creation

In aeons of ages ago, it was the lapping of the water in waving lines along the shore murmuring the sound, mm—mm—, seeming to call, softly, "Mother," out of which sound evolved this fertile maternal symbol, M: the Madonna Crown of Creation.

The letter M is the alphabetical transcription of the two undulating lines which signify water in the hieroglyphical language. The choice of this letter M to signify water, is connected with the Egyptian idea, as well as many other nations, concerning the generation of living beings.

All this, then, was pondered over before M was adopted into the alphabet, and more authentic data has been found about the letter M than about the other letters.

In all the different systems of writing, this sign M, which characterized mother, typifies cultivated districts under the fertilizing influence of water.

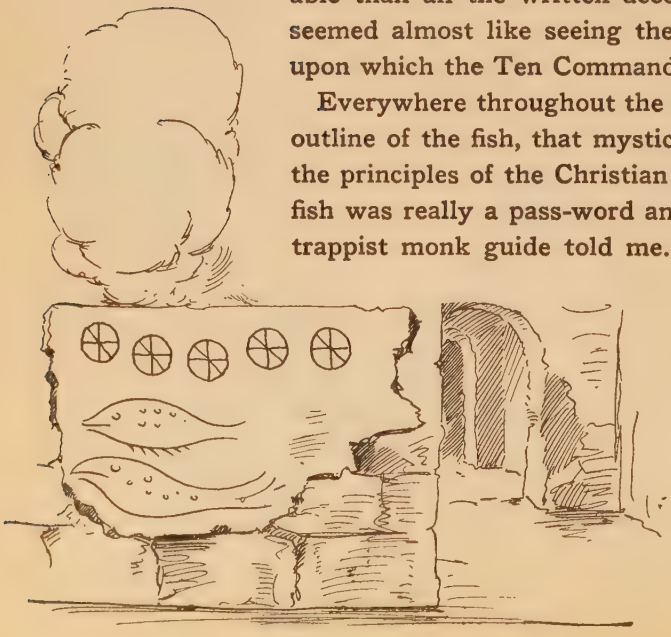


Ancient Symbols to be Seen Today

In America one may see by searching in various places, Arizona, Nevada, California and in Hawaii also, ancient rude picture writing. I myself saw a petroglyph along the cliff of the Coquina Ledge, in Monalua Valley, Hawaii. It was a rude picture of a man. The carving was centuries deep. This was the first idea-graph that I had ever seen. Its impression upon my mind was very vivid; it seemed speaking the story of ANCIENT MAN to me.

In the Catacombs of Ste. Calixtes, Rome, I found for myself, also, valuable evidence of picture writing. As primitive as the first scroll of SAVAGE MAN on the rock wall of his cabin home, are these, chiseled symbols in the heart of the Catacombs, held there, it would seem, as if by divine plan, to show to this creed-burdened age, the simple faith of early Christian days. To see with one's own eyes the sculptured record of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, makes that historical event more real, more vivid and more memorable than all the written accounts in the world. It seemed almost like seeing the actual tablet of stone upon which the Ten Commandments were graven.

Everywhere throughout the Catacombs is the crude outline of the fish, that mystic symbol which typifies the principles of the Christian faith. The sign of the fish was really a pass-word among the priests, so my trappist monk guide told me. Most of the epitaphs



were in picture writing with but few words carved in Greek.

When the tortured Christian, fleeing from the persecution of enemies, seeking sanctuary in these cold, deep halls of death, saw these sacred symbols of immortality they were no longer merely epitaphs of the dead, but lamps unto the pathway of the living.

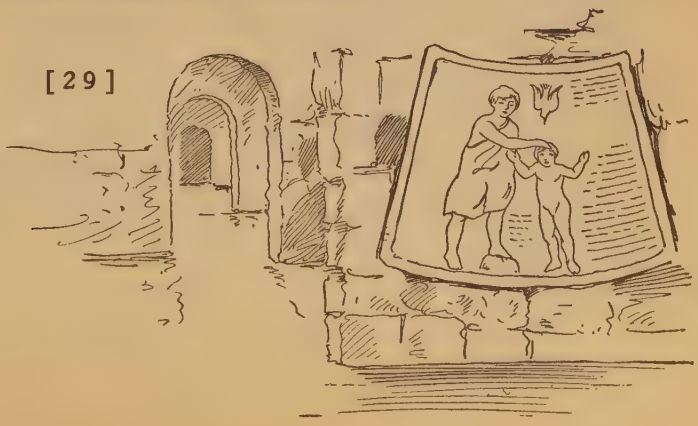
In one of the larger chapels of the dead, a pictured epitaph of peculiar vividness arrested my attention. It was a rude representation of a priest laying his hand in benediction upon a child's head, the dove hovering o'er the smaller figure.

A rock carving, the story of Jonah and the Whale, meaning the hope of resurrection, was observed, an epitaph of strong symbolic meaning.

The trappist monk guide told me many curious things in this strange hall of sepulchral fame. He called my attention to the ludicrously conventional idea of separating the sexes, and segregating the aristocrat from the peasant!

Abstract principles as old as creation were set forth by these various symbols; the phoenix typifying resurrection; the peacock, immortality; the lamb, the soul; the olive branch, brotherly love; the anchor, hope. All these sacred symbols speak an heroic faith; the faith which lifted the martyr's eyes from torture flames to the light of immortality.

NOTE: Illustrations are reproduction of original carving in the Catacombs.



Uncle Sam Made an Alphabet

Just one hundred years ago, Uncle Sam did for the Hawaiians something that was entirely new and unprecedented in his experience, and something which he has never repeated. He made an alphabet!

True, it was twelve letters, but there is no necessity for more, for, like most of our modern alphabets, every letter is pronounced. It answered to every need of the Hawaiian.

The original tongue of the Islands was a dialect, or rather a polyglot dialect, of the Polynesian which came from the Malay Peninsula. There was not much in a tangible form to serve as a foundation for an alphabet. Compared with the American Indian, the Hawaiian has very few records of his early history.

The Hawaiians were confined to islands, separated by a day's journey from other island tribes and with practically no contact with the outside world. In addition to this, they were the most carefree people on the earth. If they had grass huts and enough poi, they wanted nothing more. Nature provided everything else: heat, fish and fruit.

The Indians, on the contrary, roved over immense tracts of territory and were always involved in wars and hunting. They had more to record, hence they left more.

The missionaries to Hawaii reduced these many, many dialects to a standard form, a stupendous task in itself. Then they heard them from the lips of the

natives. In January, 1822, the first dictionary and grammar of the Hawaiian language were published.

One may see the native manuscripts from which these first books were taken.

How much better it was at that time and much wiser, to give the Hawaiians a standard language of their own than to try to teach them English at once. By the time that English would have been in universal use, as it is now, the connecting links between the old civilization and the new would have been lost and we would have no records of that fascinating but vanishing race.

An Elastic Language

The missionaries found that the Hawaiian words were pictures rather than ideas, portraying the cloud, the surf, the mountains and forests. Waikiki, the famous beach, is a word picture of waving water. Kawailoa is a long beach; and a peculiar word—K-a-a-a-wa—is rough beach. This predominance of vowels is an interesting feature of the Hawaiian language, and in no other do we find the repetition of three vowels as in the word K-a-a-a-wa.

In their grammar, the same form of a word may stand for noun, adjective and adverb. In fact, one word may represent many ideas. The word Aloha is a striking example of this. We asked our Hawaiian chauffeur what the word really meant.

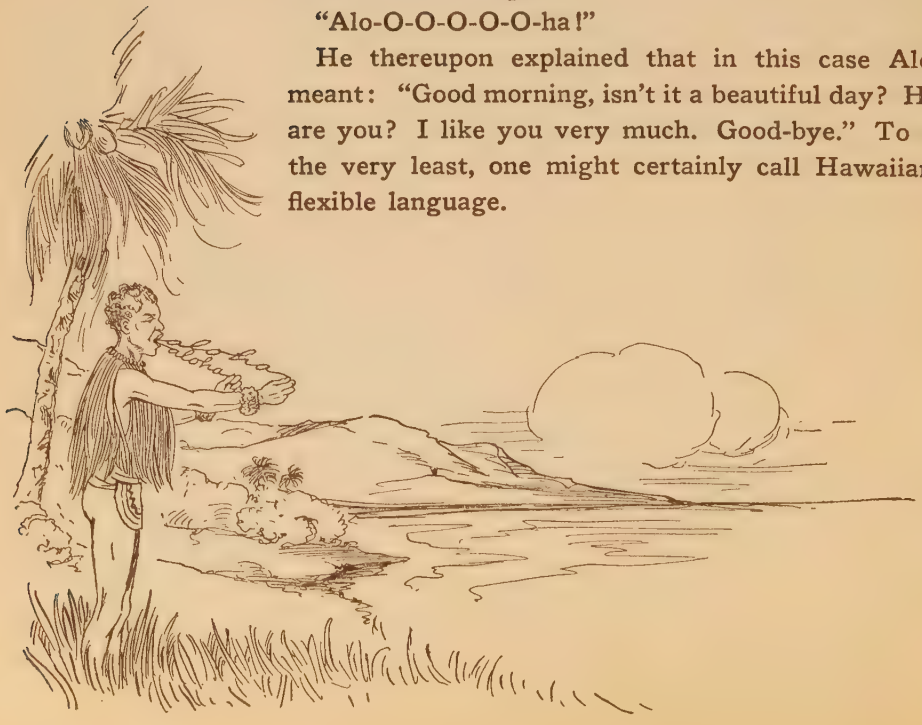
"It means everything," he replied. We were then passing through the rice fields, and he called out to an old laborer working there:

"Alo-O-O-O-O-O-ha!"

The old man replied:

"Alo-O-O-O-O-O-ha!"

He thereupon explained that in this case Aloha meant: "Good morning, isn't it a beautiful day? How are you? I like you very much. Good-bye." To say the very least, one might certainly call Hawaiian a flexible language.



The Cycle of the Idea-Gram

It has taken six thousand years to evolve the alphabet as we know it now. It is, after all, how to use these letters, how to express our thoughts and back of that, how to think. We have laboriously ascended a spiral of thought, mounting gradually from the lower rounds of idea-grams and picture writing, to the mounting steps of letters and words—it is another of time's mysterious cycles.

But picture writing belongs not to the remote past alone. What are our illustrations, our cartoons, but picture writing, and the moving pictures are the essence of picture writing!

The history of A B C is the story of life. Ancient picture writing was done from necessity; modern for entertainment.

Words are the mirrors of life; they reflect our moods, our hopes, fears and ambitions; our loves and sorrow; our progress and our prayer.

CHAPTER III

The Weather Report

THE most common topic of conversation, the weather! Can we conceive of a time when there was no such recognized phenomenon of which to speak? That trite little saying, "a nice day"; what a long story lies behind it, and what a stupendous imagination it requires to picture the blotting out of a day! If the sun failed to "come up" at its wonted time, what chaos would reign throughout the Universe! The Sun is the soul of the world, the principle of life and motion! What could we understand about these laws except for systems for computing time? We could not have a weather report without a calendar nor a calendar without numbers. If we had no calendar we would have no civilization.

Luna, the Timekeeper

Luna was literally the only timekeeper of the ancients; he had no calendar, no almanac, no clock, no watch—nothing but the waxing and waning, the winding and unwinding of God's great timekeeper, Luna. And even now, oh learned year, with all modern inventions, the perfecting of the radio, the radio with vision, the aeroplane, the photograph transmitted as telegraph; even now, oh learned year, Luna is still God's great timekeeper!

Let us imagine the long-ago time when day and night were seemingly the only division of time. Night meant darkness—day the light. The earliest data of this time teach us that Primitive Man studied the coming and going of daytime, the coming and going of the Moon—thus the month came into being. The waxing and waning of the Moon, extending over a period of approximately thirty days, was the guide of this primitive ancestor. And as the Sun and Moon are after all the standard to which we turn, all division of time is based on the study of these two great givers of Light.

Romance of the Months

The names of the months are all of Roman origin, and our present division of the year into months originated with the Romans.

January has a most interesting name. It was named in honor of the god Janus, who was two-headed; therefore this month looks back into the old year and forward into the new. Janus was the god of gates and doors, and is indeed appropriately chosen to personify the first month, the gateway of the year.

February originally meant the month of purification, from the Latin verb, "februaro."

March is the month of Mars, and used to be the first month in the calendar of the Romans, for Mars was their ruling god. He typified war and turmoil, and appropriately rules the month of the warring elements. His martial figure can almost be seen in the clouds, and surely when his icy breath blew over those old Roman hills, the Romans had cause to say that March was sacred to him.

April is derived from "aprillis," or sprouting; May from "Maius," or Mais, or growth; and June is from Junius, maturity or majority. These three months are Nature's own, for she is then busy in bringing to maturity her rich vegetation.

July is an abbreviation of Julius Caesar, and August comes from Augustus Caesar. These months were named in honor of these two Roman emperors. They were introduced after naming September, October,

November and December, which mean the seventh, the eighth, the ninth and tenth months, respectively.

Such is our modern calendar. It is a natural evolution from natural causes. Were it to be done over again, it is entirely probable that we would do just as the ancients did, turn to the Sun and Moon for our first computing.

Eternal and unchanging, the spheres move in their orbits the same today as they did a million years ago, and in them, latent, even then, were the wonders of this modern day which we say electricity has created.

The Vocal Calendar

The Romans called the first of the month "calends" —from "calendars"—to call. The common people had no means of reckoning the passage of time, and the regulation of such matters was left entirely in the hands of the priests, who called out the names of the days, weeks and months—ancient time criers as it were. Our modern week, with its planetary names, is a curious combination of ideas from various sources.

They took the twenty-four hour day from Egypt, the philosophy of the stars from Chaldea and Babylon, and seven was the number of days assigned to the week.

The Seven Gods of the Week

The names of the days of the week are all derivations of names of gods and planets; some come from the Greek and Roman mythologies, and some from the Norse.

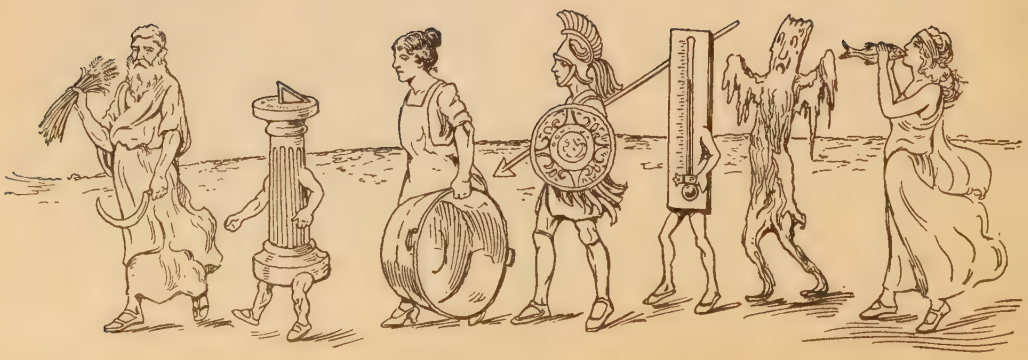
Saturn presided over the first hour of the day which bears his name, and we have kept the original word. Sunday and Monday are Sun's day and Moon's day, as everyone knows.

Tuesday is the day dedicated to Mars, though from the present form of the word, it would not be suspected. But Mars is the same as the Norse God, "Tiu," who gives his name to Tuesday.

Mercury rules Wednesday, and the Norse equivalent of Mercury is Woden.

Thursday is still the day of worship in some northern countries, for it is Thor's day, and Thor is the Norse Jupiter, the king of the gods.

Friday is dedicated to Venus or Frije.



Celestial Numerology

In the beginning of time when God created Earth and Sun and Moon and Stars, He established the geometry of nature to remain forever unchanged and unchanging. The accepted theory of the derivation of the ten numbers from man's ten fingers appeals to one's reason; but the colossal science of numerology began when God made the uncounted stars, and said to man, "Even the hairs of thy head are numbered!" God Himself dictated these great mathematical principles, and we have had many centuries of time in which to evolve our own numerical systems, but invariably we find them patterned after His.

Time Measures

And after the month and the day were established, relatively speaking, Man began to try to estimate the hours and minutes. One could write such a fascinating story about the evolution of Time's Yard Stick. The invention of clocks was claimed by many peoples. The Chinese used clocks before two thousand B. C. But you see, before clocks were made and before the hour-glass there was a time measurer called Clepsydra. It was a glass affair, transparent, something like a vase, with a hole in the bottom of it. It was a graduated urn, through which water trickled, and as it receded the passing of time was marked.

Why—?

Why have we a decimal system? Why do we count by tens? We could as easily have started by counting twelves or seventeens. But we have ten fingers and as the instinctive way to count is on the fingers, which every child does today, we have a decimal system and we have come to think in terms of ten.

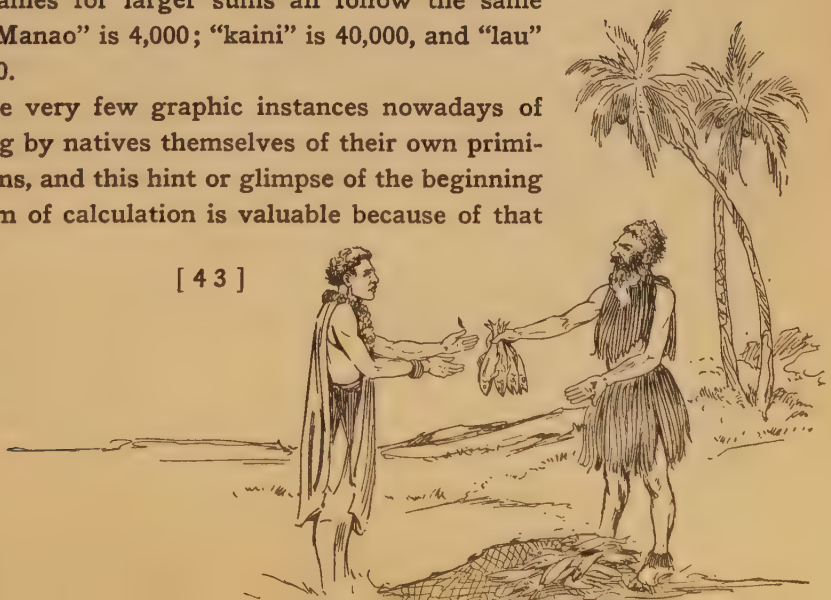
For instance, it puzzled the first American in Hawaii to see the natives count in fours, or multiples of four. The reason, when found, was adequate. The principal industry, in fact, the only one, was fishing. Several men went out fishing at a time, and they divided their catch in this manner: The canoe owner received two-thirds of the fish while the helpers divided the other third among themselves. They had no counting or calculation in our sense of the word, but this primitive system sufficed them.

The man who apportioned the catch took two fish in each hand, which was all he could comfortably hold, and divided the fish that way.

This unit he called Kauma. They probably had some means of reckoning the number of handfuls; perhaps sixteen was a handful of handfuls. But everything was in fours.

Their names for larger sums all follow the same system. "Manao" is 4,000; "kaini" is 40,000, and "lau" is 4,000,000.

We have very few graphic instances nowadays of the relating by natives themselves of their own primitive customs, and this hint or glimpse of the beginning of a system of calculation is valuable because of that very fact.

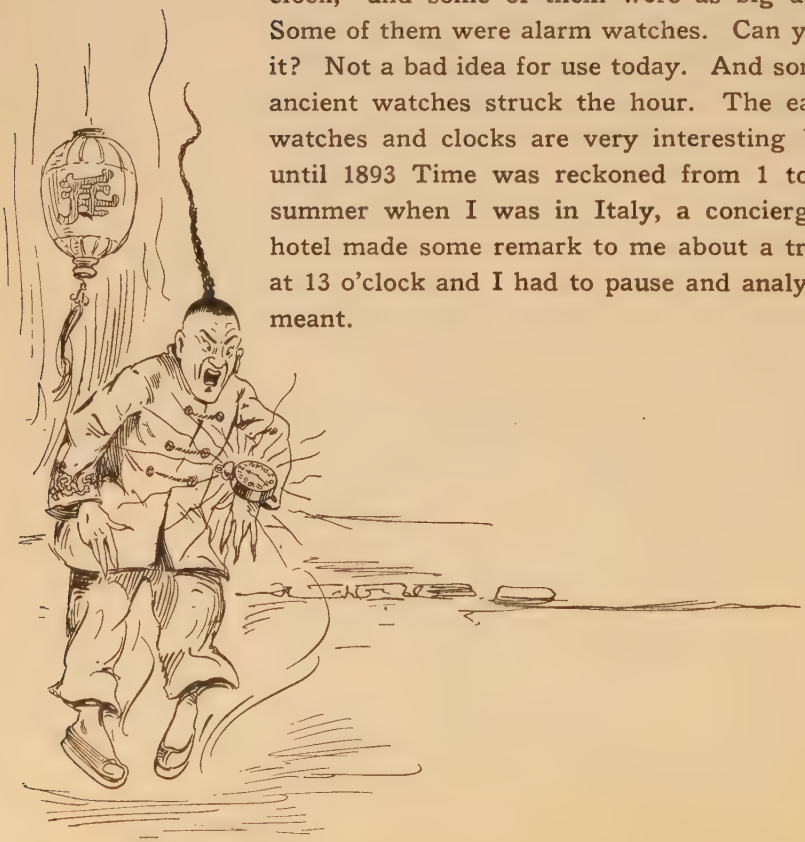


Two Big Famous Clocks

The heart of always-beloved Venice, the piazza Ste. Marco, seems to throb with the life of centuries when the iron giants of the old clock on the tower beat out the hours with an iron gong. So well I liked the chiming of the hours of an old clock in the old wall tower at Berne, Switzerland, I felt that I should like to stay for hours, close beside it, and hear the ticking of Time itself.

The Portable Clock

The first watch ever used was called a "portable clock," and some of them were as big as a saucer. Some of them were alarm watches. Can you imagine it? Not a bad idea for use today. And some of those ancient watches struck the hour. The early Italian watches and clocks are very interesting because up until 1893 Time was reckoned from 1 to 24. Last summer when I was in Italy, a concierge at a big hotel made some remark to me about a train leaving at 13 o'clock and I had to pause and analyze what he meant.



Number Seven

It would seem that God, Himself, had impressed the sacred number of seven on the Universe. There are seven great planets that influence the plane of the earth. There are seven tones in the music, seven colors in the spectrum. The Bible literally teems with classifications of seven.

There were the seven Virgins of the parable; the seven churches of the early days of the Apostles, and in Revelation there is mystic reference to the seven spirits, the seven seals, the seven vials of wrath, and the beast with the seven heads.

In the Bible are innumerable instances of the use of seven, and strange powers are attributed to the continued use, as in the fall of Jericho. In the Hebrew use of this number there seems to be a very definite attempt at identification with the universal principles, and much of the modern study of numerology is based on research in the Hebrew system.

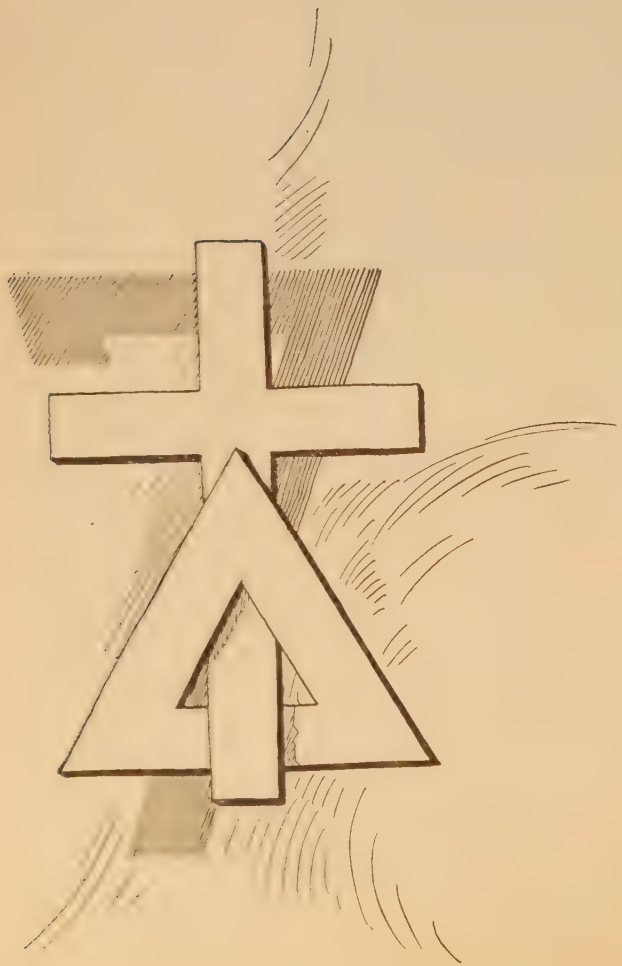
In ancient literature we find many references to seven. The Odyssey uses repeatedly seven days and seven years. We find seven also in ancient Hindu and Babylonian lore. Seven, to the American Indian, was the sacred number, while the darkey of today—who has not heard of "7 come 11"?

The number seven was compounded of three and four. The cross, symbolizing the four elements, supplied the four, while the upper, lower and central

worlds of the spirit furnished the three. It was thus a symbol of the Universe or all the religions of the Great Spirit, therefore very holy.

This brings us to the Lord's Prayer, that beautiful aspiration found in some form in all religious ideas and in all races. In whatever language or religion, it has the same seven petitions to the Divine.

To write the full story of God's mystic numbers would be to write the Story of Eternity.



Prophetic Almanacs

Picture writing almanacs today are not so far removed from almanacs of ancient days. A pair of scissors near a tree is a picture precept that tells the farmer when to do his pruning.

When I entered the romantic old apartments of Madame Du Barry at the Palace at Versailles, I was thinking of her strange presentiment. She had been reading a prophetic almanac which darkly hinted that a royal personage would pass away within thirty days. Brooding over this prophecy, she said: "I wish this villainous month of April were passed." Before May had fulfilled the promise of spring, both she and the king, her royal lover, were no more.

CHAPTER IV

Uncle Sam Marries Columbia

UNCLE SAM, the pet name of our country! It evokes kindly thought. Who can tell when a "nickname" was first evolved? Perhaps it is a cousin to the "nick-stick"—as everyone knows the antique way of cutting notches in a stick as a record. Well—our national nickname is "Uncle Sam," and surely he has made his notch in the Nick of Time!

This story of the name of Uncle Sam lacks sufficient proof to make it authentic, but it seems to be the only existing explanation, so it is given here.

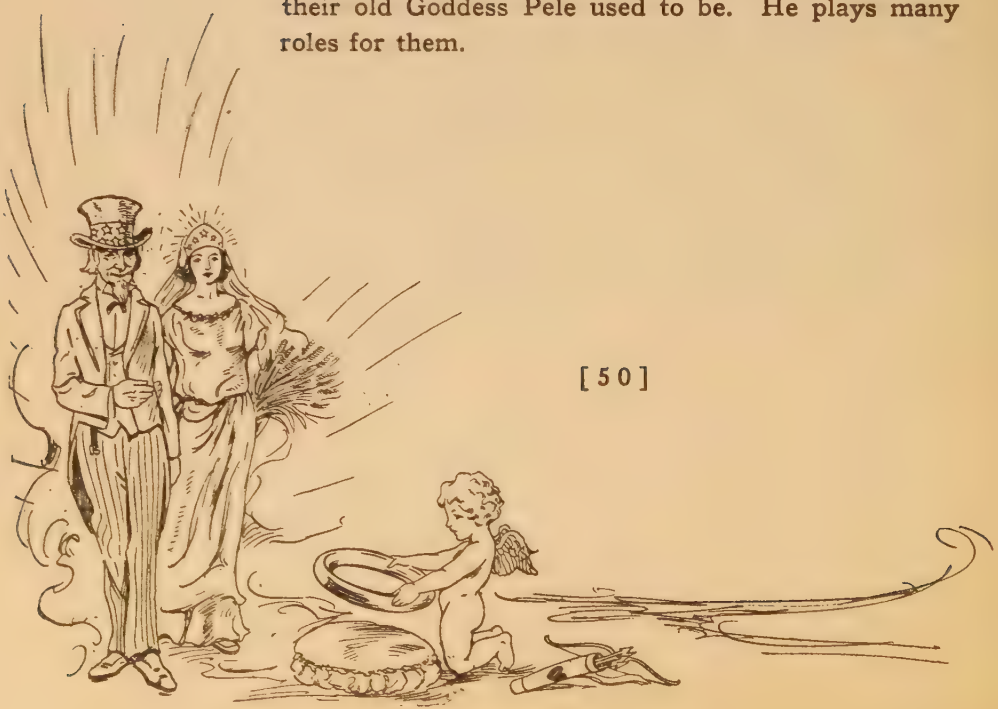
Just after America's last declaration of war with England, we had a quantity of provisions stored at Troy, New York. Elbert Anderson was a big contractor and the United States inspectors for the goods he imported were Messrs. Ebenezer and Samuel Wilson. The latter was known familiarly as Uncle Sam. One day he was personally inspecting a lot of these

provisions belonging to the army. The boxes were all marked E. A. U. S., that is—Elbert Anderson, United States. Then, the use of the initials U. S. was new and one of the workmen asked their meaning. A bright young wit replied:

"That stands for Elbert Anderson and Uncle Sam, our bosses." This was the first time that the phrase "Uncle Sam" was used as a nickname for the United States. The joke passed quickly around. The boss, Samuel Wilson, was a jovial, likable fellow, and quite enjoyed having his employees joke about his being Uncle Sam—the whole country. So from that day to this the nickname has been a pet name for the United States.

Pet name! What kindly thoughts a pet name calls forth! Napoleon said that the world was governed by nicknames. It is fascinating and highly illuminating to note the use of the term "Uncle Sam" among the Hawaiians, the national children of Uncle Sam.

Through him they are learning the lessons of government and morals, and he is personified to them as their old Goddess Pele used to be. He plays many roles for them.



Uncle Sam's Personality

He is married to the Goddess of Liberty, and their family consists of the Americans, the Hawaiians, the Filipinoes, the Alaskans and the Cubans, our cousins.

Many Americans adopting the attitude of a selfish mother who wants to fix the infantile complex on her child so that it will never grow up, unthinkingly exclaim, "Hawaii is becoming so Americanized!" To Americanize our own possessions should not be a regret, but an ambition!

As a Professor, besides making them an alphabet of their own, he has taught them many lessons of worldly wisdom as well as simple book learning.

As a Doctor, Uncle Sam has distinguished himself in the Hawaiian Islands and many other places. We have always associated leprosy with terror, squalor and misery; but Uncle Sam has made of the leper colony at Molokai a model institution. All the comforts and even some of the luxuries of life are there—moving pictures, books, lectures and the radio. The discovery of the healing properties of the Chaulmoogra oil has effected marvelous cures.

Uncle Sam has made Cuba blossom like the rose!

> "Beyond the Chagres River
> Are paths that lead to death,
> To the fever's deadly breezes
> To malaria's poison breath."

This is no longer true—it was the Canal Zone as described by Gilbert's "Patchwork of Panama," a book of poems on that region. But Uncle Sam eradicated the yellow fever and malaria there—one of his greatest accomplishments.

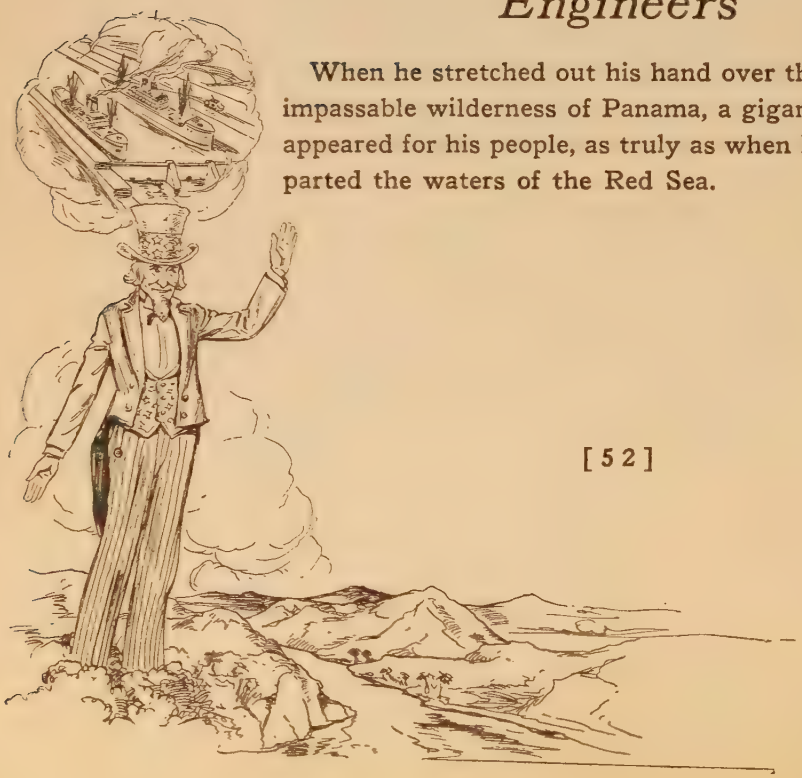
Uncle Sam the Missionary

But Uncle Sam as Missionary, must be aroused. He must not permit the religions of nations in no wise connected with the country to have full sway in his territories. Shintoism has nothing in common with American ideals or institutions.

We can learn something from the Hawaiians in reverence for Uncle Sam in exchange for the learning we are giving them. There is a beautiful spirit of reverence in their mention of our mythical figure.

Uncle Sam the Seer of Engineers

When he stretched out his hand over the seemingly impassable wilderness of Panama, a gigantic pathway appeared for his people, as truly as when Moses of old parted the waters of the Red Sea.



The Metamorphosis of a Soul

I am glad that this story was told to me by word of mouth by a learned Hawaiian in Honolulu.

Queen Liliuokalani, when deposed from her royal throne, after terrible travail of soul, rose like a phoenix of power from the ashes of the past, saying, "Since Democracy had to be, I will lead my people royally into the Brighter Dawn."

I was thrillingly impressed by a little scene in the old court room of an ancient palace in Hawaii. It was the throne room—probably the only one we ever had or ever will have in America; the room was very richly and handsomely decorated with the royal crimson. Pictures of former kings and queens, as well as of visiting potentates, adorned the walls. There was the old royal throne, the emblem of monarchy, a relic of the Divine Right of Kings. And back of the throne was a small practical door, and through that door were coming practical stenographers and clerks, for this room is in constant use by the modern government.

The new order coming in through the old! This impressed me more than anything else. The beautiful way the Hawaiians have of accepting the new regime, but still loving and respecting the old. They kiss the chair of the old Queen, and at the same time have the greatest reverence for their governor. Uncle

Sam's name is always mentioned with affection and respect, and the old Queen is loved by all.

Uncle Sam is indeed the greatest pet name in history, and without his kindly, beneficent love, we Americans at home and abroad would feel very much at a loss.

Symbolized Greatness

Uncle Sam! What picture does that name bring before our minds? A tall, genial figure, a shrewd but kindly face, with a certain dignity in spite of the informal aspect of the whole figure. This figure has grown through generation after generation. It is interesting to note that the first actual representation of Uncle Sam (although he was called Jonathan then) came from England. It was a picture of a typical New Englander, whittling a stick.

Thomas Nast, the famous cartoonist of "Harper's Weekly," took this figure, added the kindly mien which we love so well, clothed him in the stars and stripes and called him Uncle Sam!

Little did he know what he was doing! Could he have foreseen to what an heroic size that figure would grow, with what love and respect it would be regarded by many, many people, he would have been astonished at his own creation.

Kindliness the Keynote of Character

It is literally true that the sound of the name, Uncle Sam, evokes a kindliness of feeling that the cold term "government" never suggests. Our newly-adopted Americans regard Uncle Sam as a flesh-and-blood embodiment, almost. To them he stands for law and order, cleanliness and sanitation, kindliness and hospitality.

Uncle Sam has built his home well. As a missionary, Uncle Sam has given all his new peoples wide faith, and has allowed them to take the best of the new and old to form a religion that will satisfy their natural pleasure-loving hearts, and yet will give them principles akin to the ethics of his regime.

And, as in the old throne room in Honolulu, he has opened the door into the new. He has not discarded the old as useless and burdensome, and here is where we, as individual Americans, may follow our great prototype's example. He has seen the value of the old, but is alive to the vision of the new. Through the open door of the future he causes his children to look, and the vistas are beautiful indeed.

So America has much gratitude to offer to this first portrayer of our national spirit. Uncle Sam is one of our dearest fairies; he takes his place with Santa Claus and Joe Stork, and the grouping is not incongruous, for they all bring good-will and peace to us. And who shall say that Romance has fled America so long as Uncle Sam still lives?

Beauty Spots on the Face of Time

Imagine one year without a holiday! What a prosaic dull year we should have! For our holidays are the compliments, the little thank-yous that we pay to the accomplishments of time. They are our little bows of appreciation to history.

But if we keep on accumulating holidays at our present rate, our calendars will have no space for work days!

Then we shall perhaps have to devise a new division of time! Something smaller than a second—shall we call it a flash? Something will have to be done to provide for these new anniversaries.

Our whole system of reckoning will have to be changed, and perhaps this little book, too, for who knows what changes this would make in America? So let us hold off for a little time, that so much effort and research may not be wasted!

But perhaps you did not know that we have more holidays than any other nation? We add a new one nearly every year. The war has brought us Armistice Day.

Armistice Day

On the eighteenth of July, 1924, I stood upon the spot where the Armistice was signed—in the Foret de Compeigne. The four crossroads of the forest converge in a mammoth circle. And in the center of this circle a huge slab of granite, prone upon the earth, commemorates the historic hour.

The spot itself seems a mystic symbol. It were as though the four elements of the earth had joined together in mighty force to subjugate some evil thing.

The plenipotentiaries of the earth drew together here, upon this memorable day, and signed this treaty:

"ICI, LE 11 NOVEMBER 1918, SUCCOMBA LE CRIMINEL ORGUEIL DE L'EMPIRE ALLEMAND, VAINCU PAR LES PEUPLES LIBRES, QU'IL PRETENDAIT ASSERVIR."
—Here, the 11th of November, 1918, fell the criminal ambition of the German Empire, won by the Free Peoples whom they proposed to dominate.

Near this historic spot stands a monument of heroic size, dedicated to the heroes of France; its sculptured epitaph, a fallen eagle, the symbol of Vanquished War.

History must place laurel wreaths upon our heroic dead, and monuments must testify their valor—but we as a living nation must dedicate our undiminished aid to the Living Soldier, disabled and disheartened.

Then, living at the rapid pace we do, it is well to have days set aside to give us time to think. Perhaps we are inclined to take things too much for granted in America. Our holidays should mean a great deal to us. They are the days set aside to rejoice "and make good cheer." So let us go through the calendar and lift the corners of the leaves. Perhaps we shall get a glimpse of romance here, too, and full many a legend shall we find. For holidays are really relics of legendary days. Think of the tales they could tell of how they were celebrated in many different lands, and of the quaint customs connected with each. Romance, indeed. This is where we look for it when we look nowhere else!

The Rosary of Holidays

These holidays and anniversaries are the means of keeping fresh in our minds the steps by which we climbed to our present status as a nation. Not only that, but they represent the ideals to which we must be true to keep that place.

So many of our newly-made Americans have not the slightest idea of the origin and meaning of our Fourth of July, for instance, or Thanksgiving, to say nothing of various less important days. But if we can convey to them, through the spirit of these festivals, an understanding of independence and of gratitude for that independence, we shall not have too many holidays.

One whole year without a holiday! Aside from the dullness of such a year, think of the effect on the commercial world. Veritable millions of greeting cards for New Years, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day and Easter are printed every year. Thousands of Christmas books are published, and the decorators and caterers, whose services are naturally most in demand for these festive occasions, would feel the loss very keenly.

Ring Out—Wild Bells!

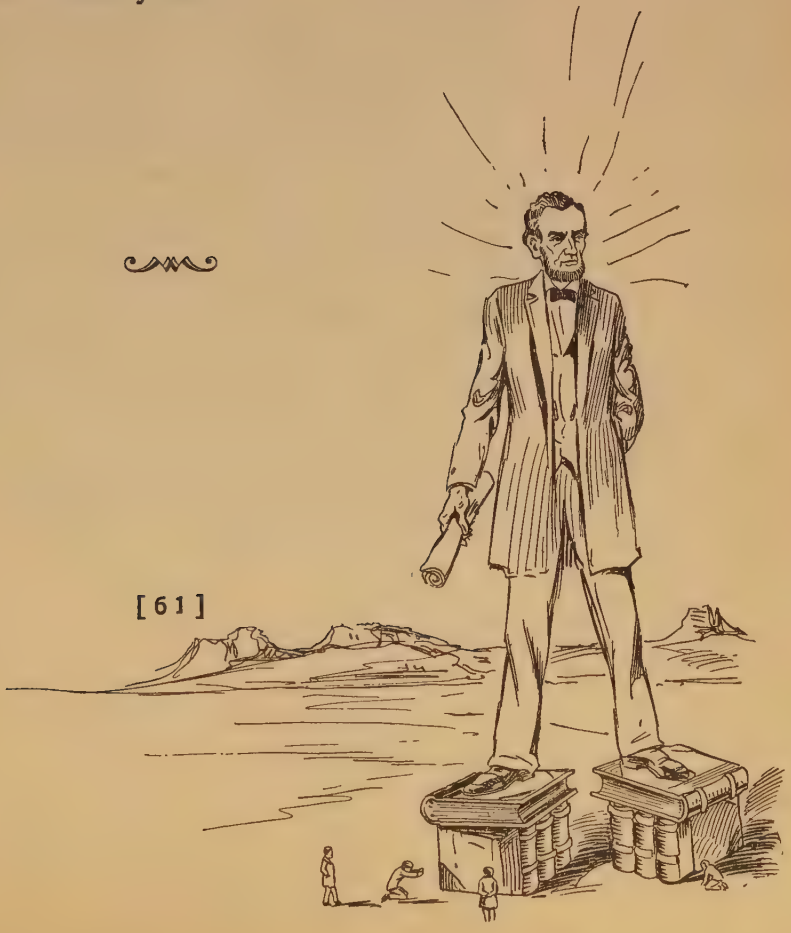
New Year's Eve is familiar to us all, but not by its original name of Old Year's Day. The passing of the old year is celebrated by all. There is something mysterious in the idea of the death of the old year. Our New England forefathers credulously climbed to their roofs to see by what phenomenon of nature, by what special manifestation, the Old Year was ushered out and the New Year welcomed in. Nowadays, blase youth raises the roof with hilarity, and speeds the parting guest upon his reckless way.

January is devoid of other holidays, in America, although in England they still celebrate Twelfth Night, on the sixth of January.

Our Hero Holidays

A distinctively American holiday is Lincoln's Birthday, on the twelfth of February. Lincoln lives in the hearts of his fellow Americans, and his memory is imbued with reverence and affection. In the masterly portrayal of our American, Lincoln, by the English dramatist, Drinkwater, perceiving and crystallizing as he did, heroic characteristics, it is an English tribute to America, and he has made of our Lincoln a Colossus of Time!

"The purest great man in universal history——" This is the tribute paid to the father of our country by a noted Englishman, and Washington's Birthday is celebrated on February 22nd.



All Fool's Day

This has long been known as a day devoted to practical jokes, not only in America but also in Europe. Even the Hindus have an April Fool's day.

The Romans had a Feast of Fools in February, but several Biblical explanations have been given for this festival. This was the day that Noah sent the dove out on a "Fool's errand," to find dry land.

Christ was sent from Annas to Caiaphas on this day, and also from Pilate to Herod. In France the victim of the joke is called "Poisson D'Avril"—an April fish. Did our slang term, "you poor fish," come from this ancient joke?

The Boy-God, Love

"They say that the boy-god, Love,
Was born over three thousand years ago;
That ever since, he's been at work
With arrow and with bow."

With apologies to the ancient poet (?), it is probable that the boy-god, Love, to whom we still do homage with our flimsy St. Valentine's Day, was born 300,000 years ago.

There are many, many origins given to this charming festival day, from the death day of Valentine, the high priest of Claudius of Rome (who married couples secretly when love was banned by the courts), to the feast of Pagan Pan and Juno, which fell on the same day as the death of the saint, Valentine.

Our Glorious Holiday

The Fourth of July, called Independence Day, is the holiday of holidays to every loyal American. It is unique among holidays in that it was celebrated from its very beginning. There is a curious record of its observance as early as 1788, described by Richard Henry Lee. At that time the parade was in the nature of ridicule.

Women's fashions were the object of satire, then as now. The ladies persisted in copying the head-dresses of the old Tory ladies, some of them being three feet high. It was not thought compatible with American dignity and independence to adopt these foreign modes, so this means was taken of deriding them. This holiday thus served as an usher to bring in a more wholesome and American point of view!

This day is our greatest and most distinctive national holiday, as the fourteenth of July is to France. Being in that country on this holiday, or rather holidays—for they danced and made merry for three days—I sensed the gala spirit of the Nation. In America we celebrate the signing of the Declaration of Independence; the spirit of the day, rejoicing in full-fledged freedom, has full sway.

Emblems of Easter

Why! Hot Cross Buns are older than Christianity itself! Among ancient peoples, the Queen of Heaven, called by various names in different countries, was worshipped with gifts of small cakes.

In Egypt the cakes were marked with horns to represent the holy heifer of their religion. The word for heifer was "boun," or "bous," hence our word bun. On the adoption of the Christian religion, it was an easy matter to substitute the cross for the horns.

May Day comes directly from England, one of the few holidays brought over by the Pilgrims.

It is a remnant of old Druidical observance. In days so far gone as to be almost beyond the pale of history, the Druids worshipped trees; their most ancient priestess received her first inspired Oracle under an oak tree.

The Spirit of Easter

Our childish memories of Easter are invariably connected with rabbits and eggs, but where did we get these fantastic ideas? The egg was a symbol of resurrection to the early Christians, but it has also many pagan associations, and the symbol dates from earliest records.

The role of the rabbit in Easter lore has a strange origin. Among some nations the rabbit is a symbol of the moon. Some peoples believed that the queer spots that we identify as the Man in the Moon really make the figure of a hare. Buddha was said to have transformed himself into a hare at one time; this hare was placed in the Moon to commemorate the event. How the rabbit comes to lay the Easter eggs, though, is still as mysterious to us as ever.

A popular superstition in Scotland advocated the wearing on Easter Sunday, for the first time, a new article of dress to insure good luck for the rest of the year. Is this the origin of our Easter "bonnet" and "dress parade"?

Many curious customs and ceremonies were a part of the Easter celebration in the Middle Ages. In France, a dance was held and a solemn game of ball was played by the bishops and canons. The custom of lighting the Paschal candle was then universal—a symbolic idea of the spirit descending into matter.

The Easter dance is a survival of the days when the

dance was used as a form of worship. In all the countries of the ancient world, the dance was a solemn and sacred thing. In many of the islands of the South Seas, today, the dance is used for worship. The hula dance of Hawaii that has acquired such a disreputable character was originally a sacred dance. There were several forms of the hula, some for festivals and rejoicing; others for religious rites.

Memorial Day

This day, May thirtieth, set aside for a nation-wide honoring of those who have passed on before, used to be known as Decoration Day. It has no definite historical reason for its adoption. It was first proclaimed by Lincoln after the Civil War. A curious history is given to it.

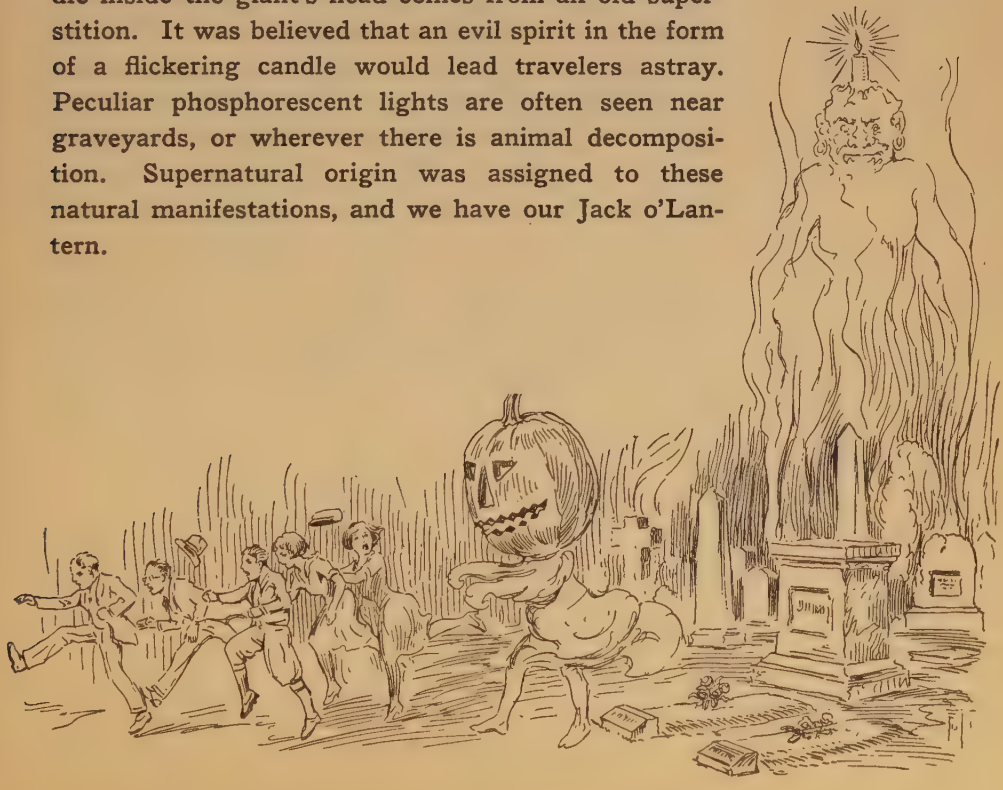
Tradition has it that a foreign soldier enlisted in the army and served throughout the Civil War. He told his comrades of the custom in his native land of decorating the graves of the soldiers, and from this our memorial exercises are supposed to have sprung.

Why Hallowe'en?

Naturally All Saints' Day was a hallowed day—hence the name Hallowe'en.

Hallowe'en is the evening before All Saints' Day. The night before this holy day was a feast for the departed. Spirits were invited to partake of the fruits of the harvest, and these ghosts were actually supposed to be present at the merrymaking. Our present Hallowe'en has turned this solemn occasion into a jest, and now spirits, witches, goblins and fortune tellers gather gaily around pumpkins, apples and nuts, the fruits of the harvest time, and try by many curious games to gaze into the future.

The symbol of Hallowe'en, the Jack o'Lantern, has grown out of two curious ideas. Jack the Giant Killer has given his name to the carved pumpkin, or rather to the face on the pumpkin. The placing of the candle inside the giant's head comes from an old superstition. It was believed that an evil spirit in the form of a flickering candle would lead travelers astray. Peculiar phosphorescent lights are often seen near graveyards, or wherever there is animal decomposition. Supernatural origin was assigned to these natural manifestations, and we have our Jack o'Lantern.



Our First Made-In-America Holiday

After the ingathering of the first harvest in the New World, Governor Bradford sent four men to shoot fowl, that the infant colony might "after a more special manner rejoice together." A little French child, studying the subject of American History, said to her teacher, "But why do the Americans eat turkey on Thanksgiving Day?" Of course the teacher replied, "Because then the wild turkey was really the only available food they could get." And though times have changed, the supremacy of the turkey remains unchallenged.

Thus Thanksgiving is our first "Made in America" holiday. It is typically American in spirit and festival feeling. Thanksgiving Day, more so than other holidays, retains its elemental simplicity, perhaps harking back to the simplicity of the Puritans themselves! Their first festival lasted three whole days, and all were friendly and full of good fellowship. The protestations of friendship were sincere, and those Pilgrims actually did share everything in common.

But it was the first, last, and only time that the Socialist dream was ever fulfilled in America.

Christ's Birthday

For many centuries we have observed the twenty-fifth day of December as Christmas Day; the day of the year on which our Saviour was born. Yet it is a tradition. There is little probability that this was actually the day—but what does that matter? It cannot detract from the Christmas Spirit; the celebration of Christmas adds to the value of Christian influence. Not to have Christmas would be a denial of our belief.

Our Christmas is really a hybrid, having a little of every religion in it. Santa Claus is a corruption of the name of Saint Nicholas. Popular fiction represents him as the bearer of presents to little children, and is dear to little ones of many lands. The feast of Saint Nicholas was held in the early part of December, and the nearness of this feast to that of Christmas Day led to the merging of the two holidays.

He was made distributor of gifts to all the young in Flanders and Holland. Their wooden shoes, and later, their stockings, were put out of doors, with the expectation that "Saint Nicholas" would leave them a prize for good conduct before morning.

The real significance of Christmas and the impregnable place it has in our hearts can only be appreciated by spending that home festival of all festivals in a foreign country.

Honolulu is not a foreign country, yet its people still remain alien enough to give that impression. There Americans have started a Community Christ-

mas Tree, to bring America seemingly closer at least. The Hawaiians have enthusiastically adopted the custom. They touchingly celebrate the birthday of Christ with the same feeling as the birthday of any one humanly beloved of them. They have probably absorbed more of the true Christlike spirit through this celebration than could have been conveyed to them by merely verbal explanation.

If we could convey to all of our dependent races our principles of government and ethics in the same way, by letting them accept and use them in their own manner, we would Americanize them much more thoroughly and quickly.

Christmas is more a time for rejoicing and fun in America than in Europe, where the sacred and religious side of the festival overshadows the merry-making. But is not that getting away from the primal meaning—Christ's birthday? Why should we not rejoice and make merry? If the day had been called always Christ's birthday, so that we could never forget the birthday side of it, would we have a different feeling towards it? It might have brought us closer to the real Christ who lived and suffered among us, who felt our joys and sorrows more intensely than we did.

Christ's Trees

The early Christians began using Christ's Trees, or Christmas Trees, as a concrete representation of Christ as the Tree of Life. It was the antithesis of pagan faith.

I have been told that the twenty-fifth of December in Judea is the height of the rainy season.

It has been said that the Christmas festival, when shepherds watched their flocks by night, was really held in April. Be that as it may!

Our American Nicknames

American nicknames and political proverbs are fraught with pregnant meaning. Did our old sayings, wire pulling, mending fences, etc., come into usage through some political faux-pas, as glaring and sensational as some of the oleaginous ones of the last campaign?

Political Photographs

The Tiger, the Elephant, the Donkey, a small political Zoo belonging respectively to Tammany, Republican and Democrat—can it be that they symbolized inherent qualities?

Where did we get them? They are just as real as Uncle Sam, as well as a part of his vocabulary. And it is fitting, indeed, that the same man who delineated our Uncle Sam should have created these typical symbols of the great, political parties. Thomas Nast originated these cartoons, and they were first published in "Harper's Weekly," in the few years following 1870. These caricatures are documents for students of social history and it is impossible to visualize the parties without seeing these symbols.

The "Railsplitter" typifies Lincoln's early occupation. The new proverb, "Making the World safe for Democracy," brings to mind Woodrow Wilson's difficult regime.

Slinging the Slang!

Slang is the "jazz" of conversation. Old Dame Convention said, "Go to it!" and it just "hot-footed" its way into polite society exclaiming, "This is the Life!"

As a matter of fact, slang in America is a genuine and influential branch of speech. It exemplifies our national spirit of humor and vivacity. It is the firecracker of speech. It declares liberty of thought and freedom of expression with explosive emphasis. Some slang phrases and expressions do not live long, but others become incorporated in the language. For instance, the term "cowboy" was once a slang expression applied to a band of Tories during the American Revolution. They stole cattle from both parties impartially, operating around Westchester County, New York. It was later applied to men who herded cattle on the western plains, but even in the West it had its original meaning, implying thievery. Needless to say, the shady meaning has disappeared, and it is now a member of the respectable family of American words.

We have Period Slang as well as Period Furniture! For instance, a little while ago we had Cake Walk music, then Ragtime, now we have Jazz—a distinction without a difference!

Jazz as a word cannot be explained except as a sound.

What Will They Say In 1999?

Some current phrases of today and yesterday will be very curious to future generations. For instance: passing the buck and throwing the bull! Should these customs and Animals become extinct they may be classified along with the Ichthyosaurus!

What will the American scholar of seventy-five years hence think when he takes from the museum a copy of the comic section of the Sunday newspaper of today, and reads such phrases as these:

"I should worry."

"Cut it out!"

"Shouting it from the housetops."

"You tell 'em."

"Beat it."

The most notable invasion of slang into literature is in George Ade's "Fables in Slang." They are truly literature, for they express pithily and truly, as well as very humorously, the typical American life of today. As Goldsmith immortalized the country life of England in "The Deserted Village," so has George Ade immortalized the "small town stuff" in America.

Uncle Sam the Warrior

Uncle Sam, victorious warrior, and kind-hearted father, although rejoicing at his conquests, can never forget his soldier sons who fell for their country's honor.

Last summer, while in France, I made a tour of the battle-fields. After lunching at Chateau-Thierry one day, I was making inquiry as to the way to Quentin Roosevelt's grave. Near Colognes en Tardenois I met a peasant driving a two-wheeled donkey cart. When I asked him if he could give me more specific directions, his face lighted up and in tones of warm affection he said, "Oh, yes, Madame, I can tell you"—pointing to the place very near—"and I was one who helped to lay him there. You see when he fell with his aeroplane, he was buried with his clothes on, and no coffin at all, so of course, in a few days, when his identity was discovered, America, complying with his wish and that of his people, said: 'Place his body in the soil of France!' You see Monsieur Quentin Roosevelt was very tall and thin. There was no coffin in the village for him, so we made a special one. I myself helped to make it."

The kind feeling that vibrated in the peasant's voice brought a sentiment akin to brotherly love and we approached the grave of our American lad with a feeling that he was resting in a mother's arms.

The plain iron fence, the granite slab, flat upon the earth, the very spot itself, quiet and secluded, all spoke American simplicity.

We read the inscription, "He Has Outsoared the Shadow of Our Night"—no word was spoken. With tear-blinded eyes we turned to gather wild flowers growing near the spot, and placed them on our hero's grave.

Uncle Sam the General

Let's go! It expresses the American pep, the French "vivre." It is confident, without a thought of anything but success! It is a companion to "Over the Top." George Cohan's spirited song, "Over There," which is the one great song the war has left us, is full of the spirit of Let's Go.

In the singing of this song by those thousands of young Americans, we expressed our animating idea. For it is the typical spirit of America—her loyalty, her ready response to the call, indifferent to danger, in peace or in war, on land or on sea—following the lead of the Right!

Uncle Sam! Our Great American nickname! It originated in the very midst of military work, war and victory. It has continued to grow, until the very name implies our national strength. It is the very bone and sinew of power, and so it ever shall be. The name shall never know defeat but shall be ever the most beautiful, the most glorious synonym for liberty and freedom the world has ever known. May it so continue until the human race has run its course, and "the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll!"

CHAPTER V

Our Two Vanishing Races

BARBARIC AMERICA! It is so painted on the gorgeous ceiling in the throne room of Louis XIV. The French artist, late in the fifteenth century, portrayed the New America by painting figures of an Indian, an alligator, and a symbolic figure of Discovery, blowing a trumpet. Last summer, gazing upon this historic and seemingly barbaric picture—that is in the light of recent day and in comparison with the grandeur of the ornate but faded room of Royalty—this figure of Discovery with trumpet of triumph seemed to say, "Exult in the Youth of America—strong and untrammelled."

The Indian who stood as an elemental symbol of America, to the European nations but a few centuries ago, where is he today?

Has America, in reaching out a too-welcoming hand to the mongrel races of Europe, left uncared-for her own two children of the sun, the Indian and the Ha-

waiian? And will this return as a boomerang of injustice? And will this pushing away of the Indian deprive America of the very strength she should have gathered unto herself?

When asked by a European, "What is your American Indian?" one begins to contrast the primitive state of that heroic figure, aboriginal owner of the country, with his utter insignificance of today.

A Day of Tributes

It was a beautiful Sunday morning in winter and was an anniversary which I have always devoted to my dear mother's memory, and as she had been such an inspiration in the gathering of data for this little book, I wanted to make this day and its labors an offering of love to her, so it was of her I was thinking as I drove out along the shore at Waikiki, Honolulu. The shore-line was dotted with beautiful cocoanut palms, so aptly described by Mark Twain—the ardent lover of Hawaii—as feather dusters stuck in the ground by their handles.

Little waves were gently breaking on the shore—it is a sheltered bay!

We decided to visit the home of Robert Louis Stevenson, which we knew to be somewhere in the vicinity. We found it without much difficulty. It was a simple bungalow, as unpretentious as the great man himself. No one was about, the door open, so we walked in. A fine old gentleman, of the old school, left the billiard table and came forward to greet us. We inquired whether he would be disturbed if we looked about. Very courteously and cordially he replied that he had lived there for forty years, and he supposed that that was long enough for him to take Sunday morning as it came!

So we wandered about the rooms, noticing a few unframed sketches in one corner. He told us that they

were the work of Joe Strong, Stevenson's son-in-law. We expressed surprise that they were unframed and he agreed with us that they should have been. But that was Hawaii! And this is where Stevenson finished "The Master of Ballantree."

He then pointed out some sketches painted directly on the wooden walls, which were also the work of Strong, and said: "These were probably done for his board bill."

Our genial host told us many other charming stories and many bits of valuable lore about our Hawaii, and her forgotten peoples.

Forgotten Peoples

America has ignored her own peoples in a way. The Indians are a vanishing race. Had our name not been America, after Americus Vespucci; had Columbus been able to christen the child of his discovery—the native American, the Indian might have been called "Columbian." What then might have been his reaction to the name? Would he have been beneficent and kind like Columbus, generous and gracious like Queen Isabella, who made possible this voyage of discovery? Who knows!

We have no Indian language, and soon we will have no Hawaiian language.

The Hawaiian has many lovable traits; loyalty is an inherent trait, it seems, in the nature of this sweet and lovable people.

The Native American

Back of every Indian ceremony lies a story. He stands face to face with the Divine; he can never escape from those powers which ruled his world! We see a great reverence for what he called the Great Spirit. The Indian never worshipped idols because he had before him constantly, lovelier and truer representations of divinity than he could make.

The Indian's stock of legends is the only thing that will reveal to future people that there has been an Indian race, because his religion, his history, his customs are told in legends. They are the story of his reaction to Nature—her floods, her forests, storms, sunshine and marvelous colors.

The Indian was so close to Nature that even his names are symbols of objects not made by man. Among these names we have many beautiful ones, such as "Laughing Water" in Hiawatha, and one strange one—which explained means: "The reddish golden pathway of glory made by the setting Sun from the zenith to the horizon." Many amusing ones have come down to us, such as the famous chief, "Sitting Bull," and "Rain-in-the-Face."

The Guardian of the Statue

One day we stopped in front of a palace in Honolulu to watch a parade. An old man, poorly dressed but quite evidently not a beggar, standing on the sidewalk, arrested my attention. I felt something peculiar about him, and when he turned his large, strange eyes upon me, I was confirmed in this impression of some mental derangement.

I asked the chauffeur who he was.

"Oh, that is the old man that guards the statue," he replied.

It seems that this old man has stood guard for ten years—some say fifteen—over the statue of a much loved king.

He thinks that he is the appointed guardian of this statue, and, rain or shine, he can be found there, patiently exemplifying the loyalty of a loyal race.

This is a folk tale the Hawaiian loves to tell.

It seems that even the heavens are loyal in Hawaii. A king died, but he had, during his life, been the victim of much jealous and antagonistic propaganda. Consequently, the custom of firing a salute of twenty-one guns at a royal funeral was not observed. But these loyal blue heavens resented the omission of a tribute due the king, as a king, if not as a man. Twenty-one peals of thunder filled the air, and the king received his true recognition.

This is the lesson of one of our vanishing races, both a lesson and a warning. We should protect and love a people whose loyalty and love for America shows in every move. They have become Americans and into their care-free, beauty-loving lives, they are taking American ideals and are living them no less truly than our older Americans.

Where We Get Our Nomenclature

Indian names lend a charm to many of our cities, rivers and mountains, and our country would seem very prosaic to us without the names of Niagara, Mississippi, Yosemite, and thousands of other less famous ones.

Did you know that Chicago is really an Indian word signifying a skunk or wild onion? And that name that Europeans have for all Americans—Yankee—which means a New Englander to us, just "growed" like Topsy. There have been many derivations, but the most plausible one is that it is the word "English," as pronounced by the Indians, Y-e-n-g-h-i-e-s, then Y-a-n-g-h-i-e-s, so we have Yankees, Y-a-n-k-e-e-s.

Of course, the Indian's own name does not belong to him, because he was named by proxy, as it were. The discoverers of America thought they had found India, and consequently called its inhabitants Indians. There has been an attempt to give the native of America the name "Amerind," but we shall probably continue calling him Indian, at least until we find what he really is. For, strange as it may seem, no one knows where the Indian came from, and from just what race he springs.

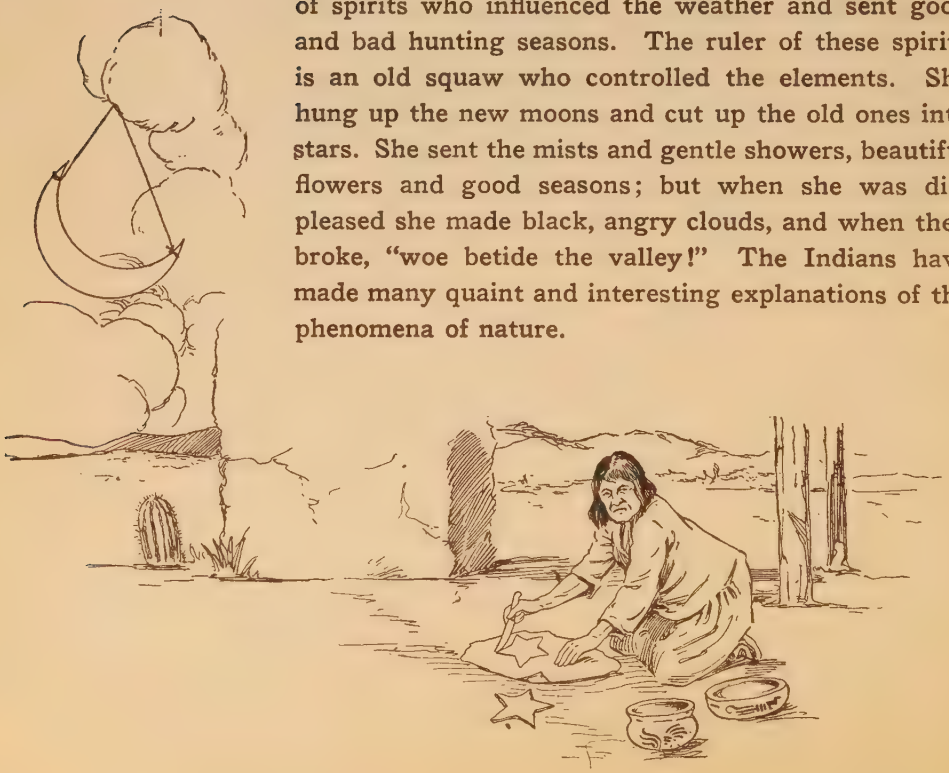
Primitive Beauty

The true Indian lore is never debased. It may be barbarous and cruel, but, even going so far as recording cannibalism, it has none of that sordid, degenerate character found so often in myths of Oriental nations.

But, on the other hand, some of the conceptions are as lovely as Greek myths.

Hawthorne immortalized the legends of Greece and Rome and brought them to our American understanding. We have, here and there, throughout American literature, bits of Indian lore and legend. It remains for some American writer to embody these pure and beautiful tales into a literary form as Hawthorne did the Greek myths.

What could be more quaint and charming than this conception of a "weather-maker" from the Catskill Mountains? The Indians considered them the abode of spirits who influenced the weather and sent good and bad hunting seasons. The ruler of these spirits is an old squaw who controlled the elements. She hung up the new moons and cut up the old ones into stars. She sent the mists and gentle showers, beautiful flowers and good seasons; but when she was displeased she made black, angry clouds, and when they broke, "woe betide the valley!" The Indians have made many quaint and interesting explanations of the phenomena of nature.



The Origin of the Indian

Nothing we have in the line of books is ancient enough to recall the period of his origin. The first record we have is assigned to a period about 1820 B. C. The Red Man must have come from Asia before that time, for he brought no such knowledge with him. By his physical traits he is clearly identified with the leading root stock of Asia. There must have been some connecting link of land between Asia and the Americas, and probably the savages wandered across it to this continent!

The oblivion of ages rests on this branch of the human family, but one thing is certain: there have been Indians for at least ten thousand years! Buried beneath our sunken forests was found a skeleton which is possibly 50,000 years old. It is a common tradition among many tribes of Indians, including those of Mexico and Central America, that communication was held with bearded white men long before the time of Columbus.

Soul Photographers

Remington has given us the painted picture of the Indian's form; George Wharton James, Charles F. Lumus and Edward F. Curtis have given us soul photographs of the inner life of the Indian in masterly volumes of Indian lore. The emotional life of the Indian as manifested in their dramatic dances and religious ceremonies and their love life is echoed in the music of Charles Wakefield Cadman, the man of vision, and Homer Grunn in his Aztec classics, and some barbaric dances of Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn.

Folk Lore

The most interesting among our present day Indians are the Pueblo tribes of Arizona. They comprise the Zunis, Hopis of the Painted Desert, Moquis, Acomans and others, and have advanced beyond any other tribes.

The Hopi customs are literally unchanged since the days of Coronado, 364 years ago. Their famous snake dance is still to be seen. It is American folk-lore, to be seen right at our doors. They live in the same sun-baked adobe houses, terraced hillsides, their pottery and baskets bear the same designs, they probably eat the same kind of food as when Cortez conquered them. Where else in America have we a people whose present mode of existence is a perfect picture of their life five hundred years ago?

The Aztecs of Mexico were a most interesting people, and seem to have been highly civilized. There is an admixture of Aztec blood in many of the Indians of the Southwest, which gives them a distinctively different character.

The mystical lure of Indian lore once surrounded the picturesque city of San Antonio, Texas. The tragic defense of the Alamo has been used as the basis of many stories. The Alamo still stands in San Antonio, and many a tale its walls could tell; old time myths and legends cluster around these historic spots, and the story haunts of European travel are not more fascinating than these of our own land.

Indians in the Mission Play

California contributes much local color to the brilliancy of American folk-lore. The Missions of California are rich in tradition and legends running back to Mexico and Spain. The Mission Play now running in its fourteenth year at San Gabriel, near Los Angeles, now a national pageant, is a beautiful, dramatic memorial to the early California days, rich in romance; the plot, skillfully weaving the story of the vicissitudes of the devout Mission Fathers with their human flocks beset by famine, want and danger, shows how the Good Shepherd toiled with one hand to materialize the vineyard and cornfield, and with the other hand unfalteringly led the way to Celestial Pastures.

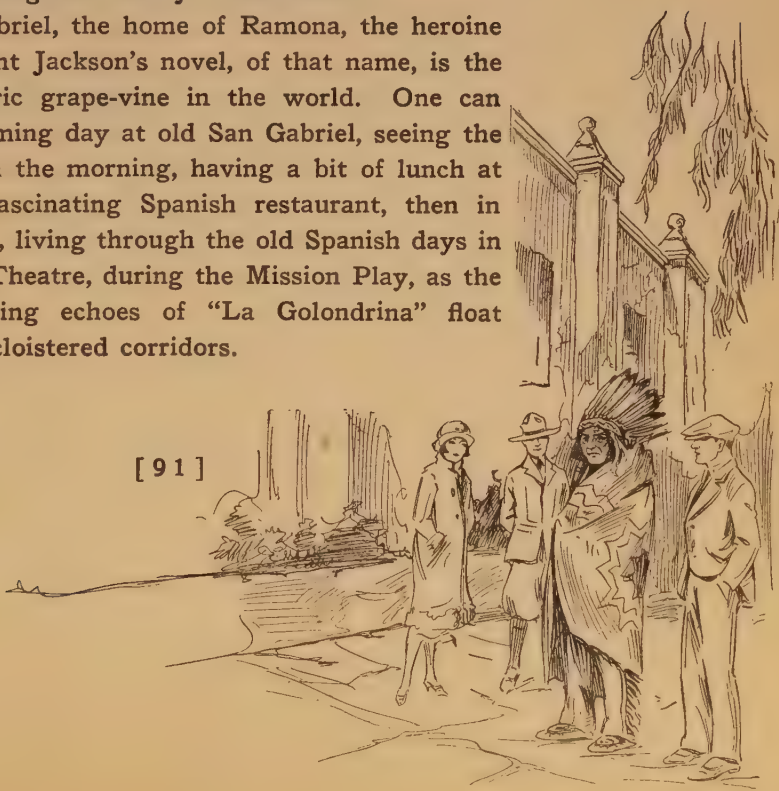
Many of the actors are real California Indians, descendants of characters in the play, and have played in the production since its beginning. John Steven McGroarty, the writer and producer, has caught the spirit of these early times and has given to the world a great classic—an American drama of exquisite elemental simplicity. Mr. McGroarty has also written and produced a charming play "La Golondrina," and he is now engaged in writing the third of the triumvirate of early California dramas, "El Dorado."

Several years ago Frederick Warde, the well-known actor, was portraying the character of Father Junipero in the Mission Play. Discussing the play he said to me, "I enjoy playing the part because the character

of the old Franciscan Father is so strong, so picturesque and beautiful and, best of all, so real, that it is a joy to be given the opportunity of interpreting Father Junipero Serra to modern audiences." There was one drawback, however, he said, and he showed us the knee pads he was forced to wear because, he laughingly remarked, "modern knees were not as hardened to kneeling as those of the eighteenth century!"

Frederick Warde's successor in playing the leading role of Father Junipero is the famous Shakespearean actor, R. D. McLean, known in private life as Mr. R. D. Shepherd. Mr. McLean's interpretation of the beloved priest is masterly; like a radio transmitting vibrations through Time's ether, the rich and resonant voice of Mr. McLean interprets fully the benign and beloved soul qualities of the great Franciscan Father who stands an heroic figure in the secular as well as the religious history of California.

At San Gabriel, the home of Ramona, the heroine of Helen Hunt Jackson's novel, of that name, is the largest historic grape-vine in the world. One can spend a charming day at old San Gabriel, seeing the old church in the morning, having a bit of lunch at a typically fascinating Spanish restaurant, then in the afternoon, living through the old Spanish days in the Mission Theatre, during the Mission Play, as the liquid, haunting echoes of "La Golondrina" float through the cloistered corridors.



The Indian in Music

Of late years the Indian's influence has been felt more in music than any of the other arts. Charles Wakefield Cadman has done more to immortalize the Indian melody and, more than that, the Indian spirit of music, than any other. Gertrude Ross has also made valuable contributions to Indian music.

The typical Indian melody is monotonous, with a range of very few notes, but the smoothness with which the passage from key to key is attained is marvelous. And undoubtedly the Indian music plays a very important part in our national fund of folk-song.

There are dozens of exquisite legends based upon historic traditions, that offer a motif for a grand "edda," or a great American opera.

The Indian Literature

The Indian has a true place in our culture in the realm of literature. His legends form an absolutely original field for writers and poets. None of them exhibit the slightest trace of European influence; they are genuine American classics.

The Indian legend is most unusual in style. It has usually a definite form, a sequence of events rising to a climax. This climax is often tragedy in the legend, but there is an anti-climax, revealing the Indian belief in immortality. After death, the hero or heroine's spirit always takes some form in nature, symbolic of the career in human form.

Thus we find a lovely origin of the Indian plume flower.

The Indian Plume

It is found in many different sections of the United States, and usually grows beside brooks and streams. It is a deep red and is a feathery, graceful flower, growing on a tall stalk. The maiden, Lenewar, dearly loved the fleet-footed boy called Arrow. A terrible plague descended upon their tribe, causing his sudden death. The grief of Lenewar was terrible. The chiefs and tribes prayed to the Great Spirit to avert the plague, but all in vain. Many sacrifices were made, but the plague still ravaged the land. Then Lenewar, the mourning maid, told the Indians of her tribe that if she would give her life for her people, perhaps the Great Spirit would be appeased. Snatching a knife from the belt of the tribal medicine man, she thrust it through her heart and ended her young life. When her blood, shed in sacrifice for her people, flowed freely upon the earth, the terrible plague came to an end. The Great Spirit favored and prospered the tribe which had produced such a brave young girl.

Her lithe, beautiful body was buried beside her lover's and very soon, upon the spot which her blood had made holy, a lovely red flower grew, a slender, stately thing of blood red.

The Indians adored it and called it Indian Plume. It was to them the bloom of sacrifice, and ever after it was the inspiration of the tribe. They used it to point out a great lesson of sacrifice and heroism.

Vers Libre, Old and New

It would surprise the young exponent of modern free verse, who firmly believes that his peculiar form of expression is entirely new and modern, to find that he has only begun where the old Indian medicine-man left off! Yet, in the volume of original Indian verse collected by George Cronyn, called "The Path of the Rainbow," the relationship of the perfected Indian form to the latest specimens of "vers libre" is strongly marked. It seems fitting that this relationship should exist, for it is largely to the Indian lore that our American writers must look for the beginnings of American tradition. In Amy Lowell's "Pueblo Songs" we find this charming poem, with a truly modern feeling, and yet expressing the Indian characteristics and quaint conceptions of Nature.

FLUTE-PRIEST SONG FOR RAIN

Ceremonial at the Sun Spring

Whistle under the water,
Make the water bubble to the tones of the flute.
I call the bluebird's song into the water;
Wee-kee! Wee-kee-kee!
Dawn is coming.
The morning star shines upon us.
Bluebird singing to the West clouds,
Bring the humming rain.

CHAPTER VI

The Treasure House of Romance

NO ROMANCE in America! Have you forgotten the Missions of California, the legends of the Indians, the lore of the darkies, the ghosts and gods of American Hawaii, the totems of Alaska? And again, the many, many stories that Cuba and Panama contribute to our already large store, as well as the Philippines? No romance in America? She has the wealth of the Arabian Nights for store treasure!

So let us have folk poets and painters! Let us be jealous enough of our own traditions and legends to keep them alive, at least.

The study of superstitions is fascinating. The superstitions of yesterday seem grotesque and weird; yet their remnants still color our lives and our literature.

How the Black Cat Became Odious

It was the custom in the days of witchcraft to make a bargain with Satan—if one wished to. A written covenant was drawn up and the person desiring the aid of the Prince of Darkness signed his name in blood. Satan then presented his new friend and assistant with a small black cat or ape. These animals were nourished with blood, and by their aid charms and spells could be wrought.

The Effigy Superstition

That modern mode of venting spite, "burning in effigy," is an outcome of a very old effigy superstition.

When I saw the effigy of Queen Elizabeth, wearing one of her three thousand dresses—it was a red brocade with gold lace—her face drawn and eyes staring as in death, like a carbon copy of a Queen, filed here in Westminster Abbey, I realized for the first time what the ancient effigy actually was. Queen Elizabeth's vanity, even after death, must have suffered beholding this grotesque reproduction of her queenly self, which was actually carried at her funeral. It seems that an effigy was required by the Court as proof of a royal death.

One of the most firmly-grounded beliefs current in the time of American witchcraft was the efficacy of burning in effigy. Any image, whether wax, lead or merely a drawing, could be used by a sorcerer to work harm against the body or soul of a person. The Mohammedans must have had a similar belief, for even today the orthodox Mohammedan refuses to have his picture taken.

Even in America, in our own Hawaiian Islands, we were recently transported into the age of witchcraft.

We were driving through the rice fields and stopped to see some Chinese workmen driving horses over the heads of rice to thresh the grain. On seeing us stop they instantly disappeared in their little huts. The

chauffeur, with much persuasion, got them out again and then explained:

"They think you take picture; spoil crop!"

Following this incident, we came upon a modern instance of efficiency as yet unheard of in America. We bought some peanuts, which had been boiled in salt water before roasting to drive out the earth devils —coming out of the process as delicious as any other American salted peanuts.

By the way, salt is the very soul of witchcraft. There are also superstitions relating to salt to be found in many nations and even in Indian tribes of America.

The Tabu! A Burly Policeman!

The word "Tabu," incorporated in our every-day vocabulary, is the story of an ancient practice which has been known, in one form or another, all over the earth. Tabu is something forbidden, in our modern parlance, but olden times gave it a more mysterious and supernatural meaning.

The ancient tabu could be laid on any part of the body, the head, for example, and if so, the victim could not touch his head. He even had to be fed by someone else. The modern hunger striker simply sets a taboo on food, victimizing himself by his own black magic!

Tabu! What are our modern game laws but Tabu? The "No Trespassing" signs and the childish game of cross-tag and "King's Ex" both come from tabu, and who, even today, does not instinctively cross his fingers when he wishes to be excused from some unpleasant duty?

One can see everywhere in the Hawaiian Islands, today, the sign "Kapu," which is another form of Tabu. In the Hawaiian language K often replaces T. The sign kapu is used for "Keep Out" or anything forbidden.

The Tabu-Stick, Antique and Modern

On a recent trip to the islands I saw original tabu-sticks used by the ancient rulers. A tabu-stick is about three feet in length, set on a tripod for a base and tipped with a ball, sometimes of metal and sometimes of wood.

In olden days, if this magical instrument was placed in the middle of a field that the king desired, no commoner dared, on penalty of death, to approach it. If the shadow of the stick fell upon him, he was doomed indeed. There was no question, no protest, so strong was this sacred and inviolate right of kings. The tombs of the kings were tabu and I saw four tabu-sticks placed about a royal tomb, two at the head and two at the foot.

We have nothing in our civilization that can even suggest the reverence with which this idea of tabu was held by primitive savages.

So strong was the influence of tabu on the Hawaiians that their code of laws was called the Tabu System.

The modern tabus are not so dreadful as the ones of the old Hawaiians. They tend more to the ridiculous. Showing the white feather is a very ancient tabu, and our superstition regarding umbrellas is another.

"They Say"—The Modern Tabu-Stick

But the great modern tabu is Public Sentiment. A whole life can be ruined by the exercise of Public Opinion. And in this the newspaper is the great Tabu. Many an innocent person has lost all that was worth while in life, his honor and reputation, by an unfounded newspaper story. This can be done simply and easily, and sometimes unintentionally, too.

However wrongly this great power may be used, it remains the greatest moulder of the mind of the people and can advance a cause as well as destroy a reputation.

One strikingly modern aid of this great Tabu is the cartoon. It is the greatest agent of ridicule in this age, and ridicule is always a most effective weapon.

Geographical Inconsistencies

To us, a literal tabu sounds like a fairy tale, but have we not as ludicrous and absurd tabus of our own? Pork is tabu to a great many people, which is entirely right because the pig is the most uncleanly animal we know. But the horse is the cleanest, and yet his flesh is tabu to us! The Hawaiian eats raw fish, and he dearly loves to roast a little puppy and serve him as roast pig. We think that is terrible, but we eat raw oysters, the scavengers of the ocean!

In the Hawaiian Isles, Madam Pele, the goddess of the volcano, has no tabus! She has an omnivorous appetite! She has sacrificed to her, live white chickens, little live pigs, whole bottles of gin, and the "chilo," the sacred berries of Pele. Women even hold out their little babes over the volcano to her.

Our Modern Witchcraft

Ah, Ouija, you have many queer ancestors, and your family tree is stained with tortures and gruesome tales, to which Ouija answers, not the "Nevermore" of the Raven, but "Oui, ja," or simply, "Yes, yes." (The name is compounded from the French and German forms of yes.)

We have magic and witchcraft of today. There has always been black magic and white magic, and out of the white magic has grown our modern magic of medicine and our miracles of chemistry. Miracles of healing have been performed by our modern wizards of white magic that are beyond the dreams of the witch doctors of philtres and uncanny concoctions. Substances unheard-of by alchemists have been discovered, and even created by our modern philosophers of chemistry. We have radium, that really magic substance, and now scientific magicians are trying to measure and analyze the magnetic fluid that emanates from the human body!

The folk-lore writers of tomorrow, instead of writing on subjects of witchcraft, will use these themes of modern miracles. Our modern witches do not ride on broomsticks, but on aeroplanes, and speak through radios.

We have evolution in conceptions of Nature as well as in Nature herself. And who knows, and can even

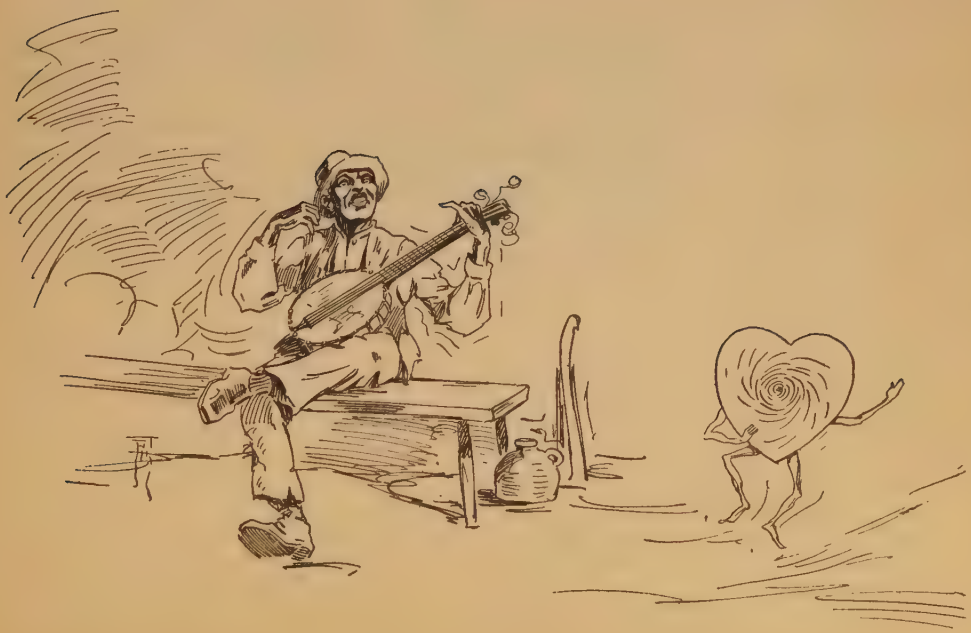
guess what miracles and marvels will evolve from our modern magic, which in its turn has emerged from those now antiquated and bizarre beliefs? Perhaps in that dim future when the very principle of life itself may be analyzed in chemical terms, our little achievements in physics and chemistry will wear the same guise of superstition that we have cast about the ideas and pseudo-sciences of those days of our infancy.

The Old-Time Darkey

Only in the South can be found the "old-time darkey" of "befo' de Wah." He, as a type, is fast disappearing. His crooning songs are not heard so universally, and we must catch and record them quickly if we are to have them as chronicles of one of the most charming, most gracious periods in our history.

In olden times the weird and the supernatural had full sway. Voodoo, that relic of ancient pagan belief brought from Africa, plays an important part in the mind and character of the negro race.

The transplanted African was endowed with a rich and tropical imagination, which created out of the materials supplied by nature a profound belief in invisible influences, gods and demons.



From Voodoo to Hoodoo

Voodooism takes us back to primeval times, to the tropical jungle, when naked, gleaming black figures, armed with hunting spears, stopped short, and prostrated themselves before a monstrous coiled snake.

The word Voodoo itself is a corruption of the word "Vaudoo," which is derived from the French city "Vaudois," famous in the Middle Ages for sorcery and from which place was brought the term, as well as the practice, to the West Indies, whence it was carried to this country.

Another curious form of the voodoo is the obeah. It is really a form of tabu. The conjure doctor of the darkey could cast this spell or obeah on him, which, in the mind of the darkey, was absolutely unevadable. Many strong men have pined away under this spell, because of their implicit belief in its efficacy.

In Honolulu the Kahuna or professional sorcerer has the power of "anaana" or praying to death. The ranks of these sorcerers are rapidly thinning, but the superstition still lives.

"Ho'cum Hants?"

In the superstitions and legends of a country there is a peculiar atmosphere, a characteristic coloring, that reflects its very thought.

When America was young, a mere toddler in the great family of nations, she had her fairies and her bogeyman like any normal child, for fairies and goblins have always hovered near the cradle of literature.

Darkey Lore

The folk-lore of the plantation darkey is in a class by itself. Their superstitions are many and strange. Some of them are seemingly without any foundation whatever, while others may be traced to the wild savagery of Africa. But through all we find the voo-doo and the hoodoo, a terrible fear of death and corpses, and a firm and abiding belief in ghosts and "hants."

The Negro in Music and Literature

The modern negro himself has expressed and interpreted his race, its problems and aspirations, and he has contributed much of real worth to American literature.

When one thinks of darkey music, one's thoughts turn instantly to Stephen Foster's immortal melodies, "Old Black Joe," the "Suwanee River," and "My Old Kentucky Home." For many years we have believed that these are the true negro folk-songs. They do not, however, represent the original folk-song of the negro, but rather the feeling of the white race toward them.

The Mental Pulse

Music echoes the mental pulse of a people. And of no race is this more true than the old-time darkey. His simple yet ardent faith, remarkable sense of rhythm and his good-humored fun are all portrayed in these charming old spirituals which are the folk-songs of the African race in America.

This chanting and crooning of the old-time darkies is weird and plaintive, and melodious to a marked degree. It is distinctive—different from anything else in the world. The structure is excellent and touching and difficult minor cadences are used in a most effective manner.

Few notes are used and the range is extremely limited, but major and minor modes are used with equal facility.

Little does the old darkey dream that his crooning songs are models of the pentatonic scale, a most difficult cadence for even a trained singer.

The most primitive songs are rarely more than one idea repeated in several forms, but they are full of the rhythm and melody. There is much charm and fascination in these mystic echoes from subconscious primeval emotion.

Modern Spirituals

These negro songs, as the expression of joy and ecstasy, or the utter abandonment of woe and misery, have no equal.

"Dere's a little wheel a-turnin' in my heart"—this is repeated several times; then:

"Oh, I feel so very happy in my heart"—repeated with a variation of melody, and finally:

"Oh, I feel just like a-shoutin' in my heart" completes this very primitive example, the same idea elaborated without monotony.

The charm and freshness of this folk-music have long been recognized by musicians of note, both in this country and abroad. But there are many adaptations and harmonizations of these spirituals that have been treated as art songs and can no longer be called folk-songs.

It is believed that the future of American music lies in the use of these folk-melodies which are called the folk-music of America.

H. T. Burleigh, who is to the music of his race what Paul Laurence Dunbar is to the literature, has arranged many of these melodies and chants.

What is the only native American musical instrument? Have we one? Yes, although the ukulele has almost displaced it. It is the banjo. It had its origin in a primitive instrument brought over by the slaves from Africa, but was developed in the South into a more refined form.

A Vanishing Type

Let us hope that the modern negro, with his chances for education and advancement, will not look back on his mammy with scorn, but rather may inherit from her exalted ideals of duty, love and religion.

All of these qualities gave her a certain dignified position on the old plantation, and the beautiful humility of soul, more than of body, may well be emulated.

"Blessed are the meek for they shall see God."

The Company Tellers

The humor of the darkey is a precious and characteristic part of his life. It is rich and good-natured, always, contrasting with the Irish, that other most humorous race. The Irishman is sometimes sharp and sarcastic, but the darkey never. His quaint turns of speech are a delight always.

This is well illustrated by the naivete of the little piccaninny. I was throwing away some calling cards when the little fellow asked:

"Oh, Mrs. Howard, please can I have the company-tellers?"

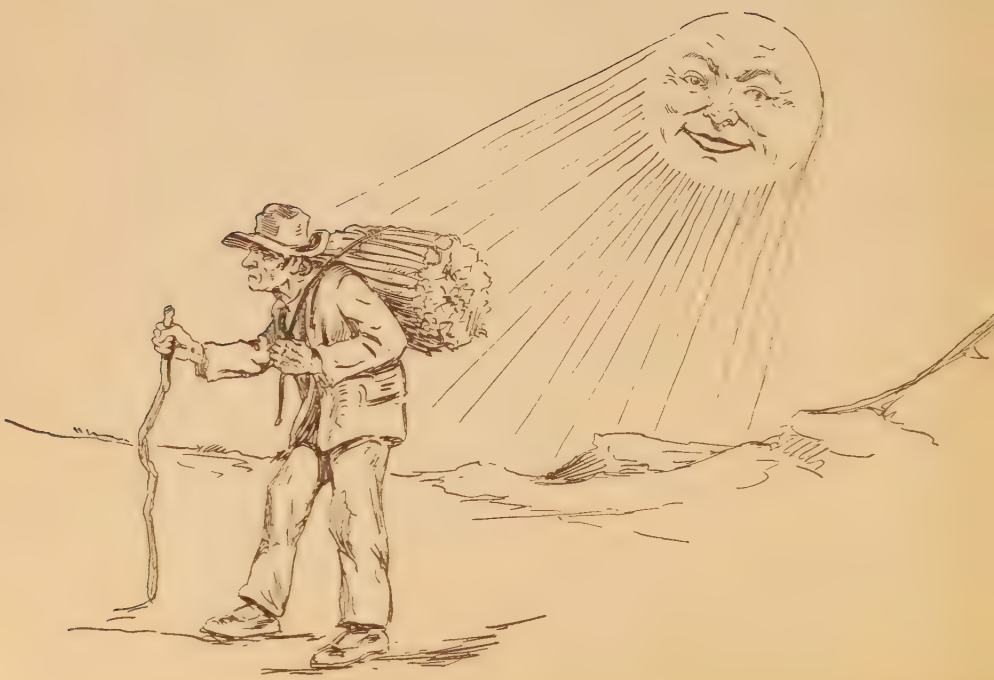
This coinage of new words, or combining of two incongruous ones, is very characteristic. The same little piccaninny spoke of "egg-take-uppers," a very graphic description that needs no explanation!

Among these vanishing types there is nothing more quaint and lovable than the old darkey mammy. Her wonderful faithfulness and homely wisdom can well be taken as the apotheosis of the African race in America, for she will live in the hearts of all.

The Wicked Old Man in the Moon

The lines and spots and shadows in the Moon seem to outline the figure of a man leaning on a fork beside a bundle of brushwood. An ancient tradition declares him to be the wicked old man of the Bible, Numbers 15:32, who was stoned to death for gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. He was supposed to have been transposed to the Moon and doomed to stay there for his punishment.

The incongruity of our present superstition about the Moon is amusing.



Surviving Superstitions

Every important event used to have its superstitions and every season some symbol. The popular superstition around the ground-hog seeing his shadow on the second of February is told throughout the country. The ground-hog is a mere woodchuck, but folklore calls him a ground-hog and dignifies him with a place in the popular lore with Mr. Stork and Brer Rabbit.

The Hawaiians have a ground-hog superstition of their own. When a great calamity overshadows any member of the royal house or a person of any position or rank, the sea is alive with red fish. "When the red fish are running" is an ominous time indeed. The old Hawaiians say that before the death of their beloved Queen Liliuokalani, the sea was scarlet with these red prophets of impending disaster.

The fish has always been a symbol of divinity in all times and all religions. It is one of the symbols seemingly implanted in the first consciousness of every race. And that is one of the inexplicable things in this life of ours—how our commonest expressions and ideas are always harking back to divinity itself.

Friday—the Thirteenth

Friday the thirteenth! We consider thirteen unlucky and Friday as well, but the combination is altogether too much to be disregarded. The prejudice against Friday is not altogether unfounded. It arose from the fact that Friday was the day of Christ's crucifixion. From time immemorial thirteen has been a very unlucky number. Even at the Round Table of King Arthur's Court, there were thirteen seats, in memory of the Last Supper. The seat of Judas is always vacant, it is needless to say.

And now we're hearing of Blue Sunday! Black Friday and Blue Monday! Black Friday was so called because the black plague of London started on that day, and Blue Monday has a curious origin—a terrible frost that nipped every one blue, occurred on a Monday in the Middle Ages!

Have you ever, when you boasted a wee bit, or told of your good luck, knocked on wood? When you do so you appeal to the good spirits residing in the wood to help you preserve that good luck.

The vampire of today, sometimes a joke, sometimes a tragedy, was, in Slavic folk-lore, a corpse that rose at night from the grave and drank the blood of the living. Without waking the sleeper, it sucked the blood from his throat. The vampire could be human, a dog, a cat, a toad, or a bat.

The remedies against vampirism were cremation of the corpse, or nailing it by a stake to the bottom of the grave to prevent it from wandering!

The various modern theories regarding cremation may have had their origin in this source. The ancients believed that by burning the body the spirit was prevented from wandering and ghostly traveling.

CHAPTER VII

The Young Idea

THIS is a little story of Now and Then. From a primer, a prayer and a spelling book, which comprised the little Colonial child's entire library, in just 150 years, a voluminous and classic juvenile literature has been born in America.

"Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep," was the child's evening prayer 150 years ago today. We had a primer and a spelling book, and in that little primer this quaint little prayer was printed. It is the lawful heritage of every American child. The little spelling book had eight fables and both the books were very quaint, to be sure, for they were printed in 1777.

With this miniature library, if so it might be called, the child had to be satisfied. Compare this pitiful little pair of books with the marvelous libraries and collections of books especially for children, today, not omitting the mention of the Moving Pictures and the

Radio. From this beginning, America has evolved the largest collection of books for children and for youth in the world. Does the little rich American, born with the gold spoon of literature in his mouth, today get less nutriment out of his well-stored pantry book-shelf, than his little European cousin gets, who has to nibble at crumbs of our language in a much more frugal fashion? In other words, European children study English for commercial reasons; to illustrate:

We were motoring over to Monte Carlo. At La Tourbie, a high point overlooking the winding paths of the Alps and the blue, blue waters of the Mediterranean, we stopped to enjoy the glorious panorama. Finally, turning away from nature's enticing view, to buy some postal cards, I saw a little boy sitting under a tree with his books, tablet and pencil, studying in the most earnest fashion. Something seemed to draw me toward him and I walked over to him and said: "Pardon, mon petit, mais tu me diras que tu étudie?" And he replied: "Oh, avec plaisir, Madame, je vous dirai—I am studying English so that I can work and help my mother." At once a comradeship sprung up between us. I was helping him with his English and he was helping me with my French, all at the same time. But the little incident impressed my mind with the thought that as a usual thing the American studies a foreign language for culture and travel, while the little European child studies for a definite commercial reason.

For the small alien, struggling with the customs and the language of a new country, there are books and schools in which Americanization is taught. Principles of integrity and patriotism are instilled into the young newcomers; and they are given this knowledge in the most attractive and alluring form.

Now and Then

This is a little story of Now and Then.

Then—that is, in the olden days—it was the thing to "teach the young idea how to shoot!" Nowadays, it seems that the young idea picks up the ammunition and does its own shooting! In this chemical laboratory of life, at an early age, they seem to manufacture their own explosives! Youth must experiment!

The Simplicity of Greatness

That it is not necessary to write "down" to children is well appreciated by our poets and writers. Hawthorne, Longfellow, Eugene Field, Lowell, Whittier—these are but a few names in the literary world of children. Writers have not thought it beneath them to stoop to childish audiences.

Hawthorne, in his immortal "Wonder Book," has embodied the story of the lovely old Greek myths. The stories themselves are for all time, but Hawthorne brought to his vision an understanding of the American child's mind, and sympathy for American ideals that have made the "Wonder Book" purely American in spirit.

Grown-Up Fairies

To the child, Santa Claus, Rip Van Winkle, Blue Beard and Uncle Remus are flesh and blood. We can often learn reverence for a country through respect for its personification.

What lovelier way can be taken for teaching the child, both in years, and in mind, these great moral and spiritual truths which build character in the race as well as in the individual child? We personify these ideas as real people who enter his every thought, and have real influence on his childish games and studies.

There is nothing new in the idea of personifying principles. Primitive people personified all the elements as gods. The development of a child corresponds to the development of the race. Therefore, let us leave to children their beautiful little faith in fairies; if that faith is destroyed when their minds are in a formative process and ideals are being born, then what chance have the grown-up fairies of America—our Uncle Sam and Columbia? Through the pantomime play with her doll, the little doll-mother grows the madonna consciousness.

He who would wish to destroy, in the child's mind and heart, the lovely figure of Santa Claus, should tear down our image of Uncle Sam. They are both fairies and they typify, infinitely better than any mere set of words or statements of facts, the spirit of Christmas and the spirit of the United States. Santa Claus

visits every child, and his generous impersonal way rewards each child according to his merits.

In just this way Uncle Sam lives for us and for millions of new Americans, who speak of him as if he were a real being. The citizens of our new possessions have taken up this mythical figure with love and respect. To them he stands for all that is beneficent and just. The very sound of the name conveys something kindly, a human touch.

The Americanized savage, whether he be American Indian, Alaskan or Hawaiian, says, "Uncle Sam wouldn't like that," just as a child says, "Father wouldn't like it."

Because of this very human element in their conception of Uncle Sam, they accept his decrees and judgments more kindly and easily. A point of contact is established between races, and transmission of ideas is much easier through this human medium.

Mother Goose and Her Fairy Family

Did you know that Mother Goose once lived? Mother Goose was not a myth by any means. She lived in Boston, where all our culture used to come from; her real name was Goose. It is barely possible that the popularity of our mother-in-law jokes originated with her, as did our version of the old nursery tales. She was a notorious mother-in-law. Her daughter, Elizabeth, married Thomas Fleet, a publisher in Boston. On a lovely summer day in 1715 the celebrated Cotton Mather performed the ceremony. It is indeed a memorable date.

It seems that the Stork was expected at the Fleet home. Mrs. Goose (that was before she was "Mother" Goose) was so delighted and overjoyed at the prospect of having a grandchild that happiness made her almost hysterical. She went about the house singing and half-way chanting all the songs and fairy tales and ditties that she had ever heard. Her voice was not especially melodious and the combination bored Mr. Fleet. But he was forced to listen to them so much that they made an impression on his mind in spite of himself. He wished to ridicule his mother-in-law, so he decided to publish the stories.

Thus originated the collection of popular nursery rhymes, called simply "Mother Goose" by all American children.

Where We Get Our Fairies

Our beloved fairy-tale people were not fairies at all in the beginning. Most of them lived very useful lives. But some strange event in their lives has come down to us, and this same strange happening, told from one generation to another, often developed into a tale of marvels and miracles, for each teller added to the tale his own fancy.

The Queen of Fairy Tale Land

Cinderella, best beloved of fairy-land, in the transformation from Household Drudge to Queen, symbolizes the innate hope of every human heart. It would seem that the story might have grown tattered by usage as Cinderella's rags, but it still glitters in fiction like the Queen's spangled robes, with each changing wardrobe of drama.

The story is of great antiquity and is told in many languages. The word Cinderella is from the French "cendrillon," meaning cinder glass. Berrault and Madam D'Aulney included it in their books of French Fairy Tales.

But it was told to children long before that time, and little Grecian, Egyptian and French children have listened to this charming tale with as much pleasure as our own young Americans. It can really be traced back to the solar myth, which runs through all races and mythologies. Cinderella flees from the Sun-god Apollo, or the Prince, just as the nymphs and dryads flew from him in the days of Greek mythology. From this same charming book of French Fairy Tales, Maeterlinck drew his story for his immortal play, "The Blue Bird."

The Cousin of Little Red Riding Hood

Can it be that there is any American or French child who has never heard or read the fascinating story of Little Red Riding Hood? The literal translation in French is "Petit Chapron Rouge," little red hood. Where we Americans got the word "riding" in this title, we do not know, and we have searched many years for its origin. At any rate, the little girl is the most popular heroine in all the group of nursery idols. The story is too familiar to repeat, but the Swedish version is quite different and runs thus:

A little girl, named Red Riding Hood, takes refuge in a tree from a big, old wolf. The ferocious beast gnaws at the roots of the tree. The little girl screams so much that her little boy sweetheart, who is within hearing distance, of course, rushes up just in time to see the tree fall, and to save his little Red Riding Hood. So here is a new tale to tell the children about their favorite heroine.

The Skeleton in the Closet

Of course we get this term from Blue Beard's famous closed room, but who do you suppose was the original Blue Beard? He was a real person, none other than Giles de Laval, Lord of Balz; in fact he was Marshal of France in 1429. He was a man of brilliant literary achievements, but was notorious for his cruel character.

Ah, Mrs. Bluebeard, you were the real original discoverer of the "skeleton" in the closet! And from that day to this we use this phrase, and though our "skeletons" are usually not of a criminal nature, it is wise to keep them in the closet.

These fairy-tale people stand for certain truths and standards in our ethics and we have come to use them as symbols of these truths.

Everyone knows that Jack Horner's pies were parchment deeds in reality—the plums, political favors. Everyone knows that when Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard, she visualized the High Cost of Living! These fairy-tale people are symbols of truths! Even so, Mutt and Jeff of cartoon fame may be fairies to posterity.

Our Brownies and Kewpies

The Brownies and Kewpies, those recent leaves on the family tree of tradition, are blood kin to the gnomes, elves and pixies, and are all descendants of the nature elemental.

Little grandchildren of the Brownies, perhaps, we shall call those delightful fantasies of Rose O'Neill—the Kewpies. Every child has a Kewpie, and when Rose O'Neill saw them trooping over the foot of her bed one morning on awaking, did she not catch a bit of the form of the fairy that lives in the child's mind and make a little picture of it to keep the child from forgetting in these commercial days?

In addition to all these imported tales, we have a most unusual collection of original American conception of child-lore, and one which is happily growing larger every year. What child does not love Eugene Field and James Whitcomb Riley? Mark Twain's stories, which have been translated into many, many languages seem to be as popular in other countries as in America.

We have always heard of animals who talked and lived, just like ourselves, from Aesop's Fables to Puss in Boots. But it remained for Uncle Remus to give us the most human, simple, humorous stories of animal philosophy that have ever been written.

Every year sees new books for young America. Our greatest illustrators and artists are delighting in putting forth their best work on children's books, so we have charming volumes illustrated by Maxfield Parrish, Arthur Rackham, Howard Pyle and many others.

A typically American Fairy-land was discovered by Frank Baum, whose "Oz" books have enjoyed the most marked popularity in years.

The Wizard of Oz has even invaded the musical comedy world, with decided success.

Children, year after year, clamor eagerly for "Wynken, Blynken and Nod" to accompany them to sleep at night, and "Little Boy Blue" has his own niche, in the child's Hall of Fame.

Eugene Field delighted in writing for the childish minds; and because he loved children, so will he live in their hearts, for many, many years to come.

James Whitcomb Riley's "Little Orphant Annie" is only one among his many score of delightful, human and tender poems, that record a valuable side of American life.

"Huckleberry Finn" and "Tom Sawyer" have almost grown out of their childish origin and are read with as much enjoyment by "grown-ups" of all nations as the child. They are immortal representations of the American boy, and as such will always live, quite apart from their literary value.

The boy who has not read of the pranks and adventures of "Huck" and "Tom" has missed one of the greatest joys that American literature gives.

These stories of Mark Twain have been translated into many, many languages and seem to be as popular in other countries as in America.

And what child does not love Brer Fox and Brer Rabbit?

Uncle Remus is just as real as Santa Claus. They will all be welcome at the fairy fireside everywhere. The man who gave to the world these most charming and adorable stories, full of a simple truth that the child instantly grasps, is Joel Chandler Harris.

Survival of Folk Tales

In children's games, among which are popular counting-out games, we find curious survivals of folk-tales and bits of history. "London Bridge is Falling Down" is actually a survival of that most ancient custom of interring a human body under a bridge to insure its stability. Other rhymes have not so much reason.

Where "Eeny, meany, mino, mo, catch a nigger by the toe," and "Iory, Ory, Ickory Ann" have come from no one knows. They are, however, just as much a part of child life and play as "Hop-scotch," "Mumbly-peg," and testify to the eternal play-spirit of youth.

These counting games must be instructive to childish minds all over the world. In Hawaii the native children still play counting-out games, and with as much zest and enjoyment as other American children.

They have almost as large a repertoire of games as others, too.

These childlike races must come under the moon, as all children under seven surely do. For the Moon, that ruler and inspirer of imagination, instinct and fancy, "keeps care" of the child until he is more able to care for himself. The lovely Moon gives him unseen playmates and companions; sometimes, he "plays like" they are real.

So all these immortal characters of the Never, Never Land are like the toy dog and the little tin soldier of Little Boy Blue.

"Ay, faithful to Little Boy Blue they stand,
Each in his same old place;
Awaiting the touch of a little hand,
The smile of a little face."

May they always stand thus, faithful to Young America, whose first ideas of service, and the loveliness of doing right, are first gathered from these legendary, but everlasting characters.

The Ascending Spiral

The Kindergarten Child, counting colored beads on his abacus; the College Youth, wrestling with the calculus of stars; the Captain of Industry, balancing great commercial ledgers, or studying the currency of countries through foreign exchange in a European tour—each one in his grade, gathers but a fragment of mathematical knowledge. The Child, learning location with his wooden blocks; the College Boy, fixing the relation of his country to the continent; the Traveled Man, studying International Topography, as he traverses the boundaries of countries, in crossing the very bridge that literally connects France with Spain —thus man acquires his geographical bearings.

The Child, embroidering her first date with bright colors on a sampler; the Youth, seeing the footprints of history on the Sands of Time—the Fall of Rome, Columbus' Discovery, and the Civil War—the Philosophical Traveler, who stands where our last Treaty was signed at Versailles, who looks from the same windows where laughing Nero watched Rome burn, or who enters the very room at the ruined fortress of Chinon, where Joan of Arc first came to whisper the story of her Vision and the Voices, to the king—thus man has ascended to the vantage ground of history.

The Traveler, on Life's Journey, from the Kindergarten through Life's School, learns that all knowledge is but a by-path; then is he made ready to set forth upon the Highway of Wisdom.

CHAPTER VIII

Romance: God's Amaranth

HIGHER than the Edelweiss that grows in the inaccessible peaks of the Alps, is a Flower for which all men are searching.

What is this great unrest? What are we seeking? What is this great want of today?

The Great War has aroused a groping, a searching for something more in religion than has been given in the past. Many great factors have had a profound and far-reaching effect on our own religious thought.

The ingathering of new Americans will add vivid and characteristic touches of Romance to all literature, art and music. And not only to these! For this same ingathering has brought different religions, and beliefs, from various countries.

Uncle Sam has been not only a cordial host to all peoples, but much more than that—an inspired missionary, a friend and a brother!

When We Shall Have Become the Primitive Past

Like a discarded almanac, each succeeding generation throws away its former customs! So in turn must our Present become The Primitive Past.

Try, then, to conceive of our brilliant America of today as having become the primitive past! The primitive past indeed! Have we not been victorious in war, marvelous in invention, progressive in every possible way? What is there left for future generations to invent?

An airless radio or a waterless cable? Perhaps some future author will write books without paper! Perhaps we shall have automatic brain machines!

Forsooth a well trained little Marconigram sent forth as an inquiry, will meet its answering message somewhere out in the new atmospheric condition formerly known as air; dutifully scan itself, and if the reply is not correct, automatically make it so!

We may have to make a new system of currency, and also we wonder what unborn folk-hero will be the vogue of coming days. We buried old John Barleycorn decently, we thought, but his ghost walks forth in broad daylight.

Forecasting the Future

When we shall have become the primitive past, perhaps making a call on a friend in Mars will be just a little afternoon's outing. Perhaps we will casually engage the services of a day Moon instead of the Sun, just to afford a little softer light for an afternoon party. Possibly we may bribe the Sun to strike for one or two months, just to show what we can do in the way of strikes; and, maybe, for a little sensation some day, an operator on the Radio will get a message straight from Heaven or Hell!

And when all this takes place, the sophisticated inhabitants of this no longer mundane sphere will probably refer to this—our triumphant twentieth century —as the primitive past.

But who shall dare write a prophecy of the future!

The World Refinery

The American is the great Cosmopolite; America the great Anglo-Saxon-Latin-Oriental Melting Pot, not only of races, ideas, arts, sciences and Romance, but also of religions.

For, after all, religion is the great basic structure of any country.

There are many rivulets all flowing into the great, broad, living, surging stream of religious philosophy. Its source is God's word.

Let us read it with the eyes of the soul!

Our High Destiny

For America has a belief in herself—the same sustaining faith that guided our discoverer, Columbus, when he fared forth with the vision of a new continent, an undaunted mariner braving the perils of the deep with three small caravels!

It has been said that the grouping of nations on this hemisphere is not chance, but destiny.

There is purpose in it, and that purpose must be to evolve a higher citizenry; a citizenry whose eyes, seeing beyond the horizon of the present, shall not forget the Romance of the Past.

For out of the traditions of yesterday forever emerges the Romance of today. Unearthing traditions might seem a musty occupation, but Romance is always young, like a flower that blooms in a mouldering soil or the iridescent flash of the butterfly's wing fluttering forth from the dead, dark Chrysalis. In whatever soil of Time we make our investigations, if we walk through desert places, or if in shadowy paths, strewn with the mildewed leaves of decaying civilization, we still find the flower of Romance blooming.